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GIVEN BY

W. Phillips

THE
PETITION AND MEMORIAL

OF THE
PLANTERS OF DEMARARA AND BERBICE,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

MANUMISSION,

EXAMINED:

BEING AN EXPOSURE OF THE INACCURACY OF THE STATEMENTS,
AND THE FALLACY OF THE VIEWS,

ON WHICH THEY HAVE PROCEEDED IN THEIR RECENT APPLICATION
TO HIS MAJESTY IN COUNCIL.

LONDON:

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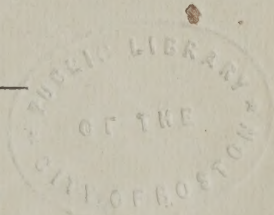
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MEMORIAL AND PETITION

OF THE

PLANTERS OF DEMARARA AND BRIBIBE

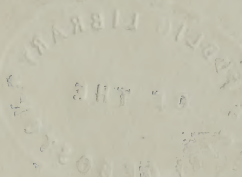
OF THE SUBJECT OF

MANUMISSION.

J. Phillips

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THE
PETITION AND MEMORIAL
OF THE
PLANTERS OF DEMARARA AND BERBICE
ON THE
SUBJECT OF MANUMISSION,
EXAMINED.

IN pursuance of the Resolutions adopted by Parliament in May, 1823, on the subject of Slavery, his Majesty's Government introduced into Trinidad, by an Order of Council, a law to the following effect :— That in case any Slave shall be desirous to purchase the freedom of himself or herself, or of his or her wife or husband or child or brother or sister, or reputed wife or husband or child or brother or sister, it shall and may be lawful for any such Slave so to purchase the freedom of himself or of any such other person as aforesaid; and if the owner of the Slave shall be unwilling to effect his or her manumission; or shall be unable to execute a valid manumission; or shall not be known, or be disputed; or if the owner demand, as the price of freedom, a greater sum of money than may be the fair and just value of such Slave, then the Chief Judge, after issuing certain notices and summonses, shall cause the Protector of Slaves and the owner to nominate each an appraiser, the Judge himself nominating an umpire, who on their oaths, shall make a fair and impartial appraisement; and the amount of such appraised value being duly paid either to the owner, or, if the ownership be in dispute, to the Treasurer of the Colony, for the benefit of the real owner, such Slave shall be free to all intents and purposes whatsoever.—This is the substance of the law on the subject of manumission, omitting the more formal details of the enactment.

His Majesty's Government having imposed the above law on the colony of Trinidad, required that it should also be adopted in the colonies of Demarara and Berbice. With this requisition the Court of Policy of Demarara positively refused to comply; on which Lord

Bathurst, on the 9th July, 1825, intimated to them, that his Majesty's Government regarded the clause respecting manumission which they had so absolutely rejected, as "a vital part of their whole measure" which "could not be dispensed with." "No system of measures" he affirmed, "would satisfy the feelings of the country, or execute the purposes of Parliament, which did not contain some direct provision by which the termination of Slavery may be gradually accomplished." "From the final accomplishment of this object," he again assured the Court of Policy, that "this country will not be diverted." "I now," he added, "for the last time, bring these regulations under the consideration of the Court of Policy, *with no other alternative, in the event of their declining to admit them, than that of my humbly submitting to his Majesty the expediency of enacting them by direct Royal Authority.*"

With a view of averting the execution of this threat, the Planters of Demarara, and also of Berbice, have presented a Petition and Memorial to his Majesty in Council, exhibiting the grounds on which they apprehend utter ruin to themselves and their property, if the intention of Lord Bathurst shall be carried into effect. The Petitioners have been heard by Counsel in support of their petition, and the matter now remains for the consideration and final decision of his Majesty's Government.

Under these circumstances it may be useful to pass in review the leading statements and arguments of the Petitioners and their Counsel, especially as they involve almost all the great questions at issue between the West Indian Planters and the Abolitionists. But before entering on these questions, it will be proper to advert to one or two topics which have been brought forward, with the view of vindicating the Petitioners, from any unfavourable imputation to which they might be exposed, by their resistance to the wishes of his Majesty's Government, on this occasion.

They assert, in the first place, their *ready* co-operation in all the other measures of Reform proposed by his Majesty's Government.

"The Court of Policy" they say, "has evinced the most anxious desire to act up to the Resolutions of Parliament." And Mr. Adam, the leading Counsel of the Petitioners, going even beyond the Petitioners, stated, on their behalf, that it was to this single clause respecting manumission, that the Planters of Demarara had refused to give their assent; and that on every other point they had set themselves with hearty goodwill to carry into effect the wishes of Government.

This statement however is contradicted by the official correspondence.* So far were the Court of Policy from *readily* adopting all the clauses proposed by Lord Bathurst, with this one exception, that his Lordship, in his dispatch of 20th November 1824, was under the necessity of refusing his assent to their draft of the 25th of June, 1824, and of preremptorily insisting on a more exact adherence to the terms of the Trinidad Order in Council.

The omissions and alterations in that draft, as compared with the Order, were numerous and important; and Lord Bathurst distinctly stated, that if the Court of Policy did not proceed forthwith to adopt the improvements he now suggested, His Majesty's Government "would feel it to be their paramount duty to issue without further delay an Order of Council for the purpose of carrying them into effect."

This intimation was not without its effect on the Court of Policy. In a subsequent draft transmitted to Lord Bathurst on the 14th of March 1825, they introduced some important changes in compliance with his Lordship's suggestions. But even this amended draft, which has since, with a slight alteration, become the law of Demarara, falls far short of the propositions of His Majesty's Government on some other points, as well as on that of manumission. Without attempting to particularize the various defects, and injurious modifications of particular clauses, it will be sufficient to state, that Sunday markets have not been abolished, nor has Sunday labour been *effectually* prohibited; that in affecting to give a legal sanction to the marriage of slaves they have introduced provisions which go far to render it of no avail; and also that the law as to the slave's right of property is left in a very imperfect state.† Besides all this that important Clause of the Trinidad Order, the 21st, obliging the owner to account for the illegal laceration of his slave, is entirely omitted.

It cannot therefore be with truth affirmed, that the manumission

* Papers presented to Parliament by His Majesty's command 1825, pp. 196, 226, and additional papers 1825, p. 259, 279.

† The slave among other things is not allowed to hold land as in Trinidad. This is a very important and injurious distinction. Few things would have more tended to make manumission a source of improvement to the slave, than his previous possession of land of his own, prepared to receive him, and which he could immediately begin to till. It is from want of such means of beneficial employment, that on his enfranchisement, he sometimes falls into idle and vicious habits. See on this point the parliamentary papers of 1826, under the head of St. Lucia, p. 76, 77.

clause is that alone to which the Colonists of Demarara have refused their assent; or that they have manifested any very hearty goodwill in complying with the wishes of Government.

A second topic hinted at in the Memorial, but much insisted upon by the leading counsel, was the great comfort and happiness enjoyed by the slave population of Demarara and Berbice, under the mild and benign government of their masters. On this point a full investigation was boldly challenged.

Unhappily for the credit of this part of their vindication, there is already before the public opposing evidence of a nature which would not be invalidated by the concurrent testimony of every planter in the two colonies, in favour of the mildness and lenity of their administration. The actual decrease of the slaves in Demarara, has amounted to 8,754 in the six years, from 1818 to 1824, being nearly at the rate of two per cent. per annum.* And this enormous decrease has taken place while the free negroes of Hayti, and indeed of all parts of the world besides, and the slaves in the United States, and in the Bahamas have been increasing at the rate of from 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum. There is no possibility of explaining this phenomenon on any principle which is compatible with the alleged humane treatment of the slave.

But in addition to this fact which, of itself is demonstrative of the deathful tendency of the Demarara system of management, there is much corroborative testimony to the same effect. The Negro Slavery Tract, No. I, contains a particular account of that system by an eye-witness highly worthy of credit, the late Missionary Smith. The returns from the Fiscal of Demarara, as they stand in the parliamentary papers ordered to be printed 1st March 1825, No. 66, may also be referred to. But above all may an appeal be made with confidence to the Report of the Fiscal of Berbice, (Parliamentary papers of 23rd of June 1825, numbered 476,) and to the attempted vindication of that report by the Fiscal himself, laid on the table of the House of Commons, May 19, 1826, (No. 401.) A full view of these two Reports will be found in the Anti-Slavery Reporters, No. 5. and 16. In the latter it is observed that "to the sickening influence on the mind of the details contained in these reports, no declamation could add force. They beggar the most intense epithets, and produce an impression which no

* See Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. 26, p. 11, &c., and the documents there referred to.

description, however eloquent, could hope to rival in poignancy and effect. And it is the climax of these horrors that most of them are not only not judicially punished, but are not legally punishable.”*

But before we proceed to consider the main question involved in the Memorial, that of manumission, it seems necessary to advert to what is affirmed by its authors on the subject of their *right of property in their slaves*. That right, they say, “rests on the very same foundation with every other description of property known to the law.” And in a former statement by the Court of Policy of Demarara, it is asserted, in confirmation of their doctrine, that “Slaves in this Colony are *chattels as much as any other moveable property*,” the interest of an owner in his slave being that of *fee simple absolute*.

Without meaning at all to enter on the great moral question, of the right which any man can possess of reducing his unoffending fellow creatures, and their still more unoffending offspring, to perpetual slavery, it may nevertheless be allowed us to doubt the *legal* sound-

* It was not intended to illustrate these general observations by any specific instances, but the single fact which follows, and which is only one of many, will serve to throw so much light both on the law and practice of Slavery in these Colonies, that it would be wrong to withhold it.

• In the Fiscal’s first Report, p. 14, is contained a statement to the following effect.

“Complaint of the woman *Minkie*, belonging to Thomas C. Jones :—Says, Mr. Jones took her out of the barracks on Tuesday ; ‘after I got home he sent me to Mr. Henery ; he would not buy me. He sent me to another gentleman. I do not know his name, but he lives in town ; they both said my master asked too much money for me, and sent me back. I begged for a pass to look for an owner ; he said no, he would put me down and cut my—, and would give me more than the law gives. I was then laid down and tied to three stakes, and Chance flogged me with a cart-whip ; I got a severe flogging ; I saw Mr. Layfield at his door with another gentleman, and Mr. Kerschner, the baker, saw it from his window. Mr. Jones bought me from Mr. Logie of Demarara. I have marks of severe punishment visible on me, old and recent floggings, all inflicted by Jones.’

“Exhibits her posteriors, which are covered with a plaister, by order of the doctor, and apparently lacerated to that degree that the court judged it expedient to direct her not to uncover it.” (p. 14.)

“Mr Jones said he *had* flogged her, and broke her mouth for her insolence. He had thirty-nine laid on her, and *they were well inflicted*. When he sent for her, he had no intention of flogging her ; but after sending her to three persons for sale, and not succeeding, he told her she had often deserved a flogging ; he then directed her to be flogged, and that they should be well laid on, which was done.”

The result of this case is given in the Fiscal’s Second Report, (p. 10.) and

ness of these strange dicta of the Court of Policy, and which they ought to have proved rather than asserted. It rests with them to point out the chapter of either Dutch or English law in which such a position is to be found. Mr. Adam did not attempt it.

But even if so strange a position could be shewn to have a place under the Dutch law, it would not necessarily become law under the British rule, any more than the Spanish law of torture, which existed in Trinidad, could continue to be law subsequently to its becoming a

it is the more worthy of attention because it is actually given as a vindication of the Colonial system from the charge of cruelty ; whereas in truth it only furnishes another striking illustration of the cruel and oppressive nature of that system, and completes the picture of horror which the previous details had presented. "His Honour, the President, and the Court," we are told, "were highly indignant at the treatment of this female. No evidence, however, could be obtained to convict the proprietor (Mr. Jones) of having inflicted a severer punishment *than that prescribed by law.*" It is added that, "the Court were fully satisfied that the unfortunate female slave had been flogged *in a most severe and cruel manner*, and to her sufferings, by her master's own confession" (who indeed, seemed to glory in his barbarity) "was added the breaking of her mouth in a most brutal manner." In conclusion, her master was directed *to take her from the custody of the under sheriff, on payment of the fees.* She was returned, that is to say, into the power of this monster, by order of the Court.

Now let any one consider all the horrors of this clear and unambiguous case of cruelty, and the impunity which has attended it, and then say, whether the detestable system which can screen such conduct from justice, is not only to be endured by the country, but praised by the petitioners. The savage master was not proved, it seems, to have offended against the *law*,—this is true ; for he had done nothing more than the law expressly authorised every master to do. At his own caprice, for no earthly crime that even he himself could specify, he lacerated "in a most severe and cruel manner," the naked body of this unprotected and unoffending female ; but as it could not be *proved* that the number of stripes exceeded thirty-nine, however "well they were laid on," to use his own brutal expression of triumph ; however deep they cut into the flesh, and though he broke her mouth besides ;—no punishment could reach him ; nay, the law actually protected and sanctioned his crime. We have been told, by no mean authority in colonial matters, as a palliation of these evils, that atrocities are perpetrated in England as well as in the West Indies ; but we challenge all the advocates of the colonial system to produce any case, be it in law or practice, which will bear the remotest comparison to this transaction. It is an admirable illustration of the innate flagitiousness of that institution, which still finds so many plausible advocates among us, and which, owing to their delusive statements, is still permitted to flourish in mischievous vigour in one of the fairest portions of the British Dominions.

British colony. The Dutch law would have permitted the Slave Trade in Demarara: but could a claim have been therefore preferred by that Colony to the continuance of the Slave Trade after it had capitulated to the British arms; much less after its cession to Great Britain, when of course the right of sovereignty and of legislation became fully vested in the British Crown?

Supposing even a law authorising the Slave Trade had been in full force in that Colony, at the time of its capture by Great Britain, could this circumstance have been pleaded for one moment as a ground for continuing that traffic after the Colony had become British?

If it were even admitted, therefore, which it is not, that the law of property in Slaves had been such in Demarara under the Dutch rule as the Court of Policy represent it to have been, it would by no means follow that that law could continue to operate there under British rule, any more than the law of torture could continue to operate in Trinidad.

But it is not true, that, either under the Dutch or the British Government, the nature of an owner's property in his slaves is declared by law to be of that absolute and unqualified description which the Demarara planters have asserted. It does *not* rest "on the very same foundation with every other description of property known to the law." Slaves are *not* in law "chattels, as much as any other moveable property." Neither is a master's interest in his slave "that of a *fee simple absolute*." On the contrary, in the case of slaves, the law has assumed a power of interference and control which is not assumed with respect to any other description of property. An owner may extinguish the life of his oxen, or his dogs, or his horses; he may refuse to feed them; he may allow them to perish from neglect; he cannot be restrained from working them by night or by day; he cannot be compelled to give them the rest of the Sabbath; he cannot be called upon to answer their complaints:—and with respect to his chattels generally, he may break them in pieces, destroy or consume them, without any responsibility, and without control from law, so long as he does not thereby injure the property of his neighbour. There are, therefore, very material points of distinction between all other kinds of property and a property in human beings.

But this is not all: no other description of property, no other chattel, has responsibilities inherent in it, and rights arising out of those responsibilities, similar to those which are inherent in the slave: for though he be a slave, he has been born a subject of the Divine Government, answerable, in common with every human being, for his moral conduct.

Every *British* slave is also a subject of the British crown, owing allegiance to him who wears it, bound to obey the laws, and amenable to trial and punishment for the breach of them. A slave moreover may be a Christian, a husband, a wife, a parent, a child; and in each of these relations, as well as in that of an accountable moral agent, and of a British subject, may possess responsibilities of the highest order, which he may be bound to fulfil, in preference to every other obligation whatever, and which his owner therefore may lawfully be compelled to respect. It cannot be, that the British and Christian owner of a slave can, *justly and legally*, be invested with any rights of property which are inconsistent with these inalienable responsibilities. It cannot be, that, under the British crown, any such alleged rights of property can exist, without a plain and palpable violation of those fundamental principles of law which, however varied may be the form of their application, are essential to all British legislation. The assertion of such rights as these, by whomsoever made or whencesoever deduced, is an intolerable usurpation on the laws of God and the rights of human nature—on the rights of British sovereignty, and the fundamental principles of British jurisprudence.

The Petitioners and their Advocate have therefore clearly gone too far in the assertion of their unqualified right of property in slaves; and there must, of necessity, exist certain important limitations of that right, to which there is no parallel in the case of other descriptions of property.

The principle here contended for may be illustrated by what has recently passed in respect to Trinidad. When it was first proposed by Lord Bathurst to the Planters of that Colony, that Sunday should be wholly relinquished to the slave, as his own right and property, and that equivalent time for the purposes to which his Sunday had hitherto, for the benefit of the owner, been applied, should be allowed him in its stead, the Colonists preferred a claim to compensation for what they alleged to involve a deterioration of their property, being an abduction of a portion of that labour which they had hitherto appropriated to their own use. His Lordship's reply to this claim was, that such a regulation as he proposed could give to the Planters no just claim for compensation. Whatever might be the master's right of property in the slave, the slave, his Lordship maintained, had also "*his rights*." The master was bound to feed his slave, either by an adequate allowance of provisions, or by giving him land and time to raise them. But Sunday was the *slave's* day, and could not be required by the master for *his own* purposes. That day, he therefore argued, must belong to

the *slave entirely* for his own profit and advantage; and even where the master adopted the system of feeding his slaves, by allotting to them provision grounds, he could even then have no possible claim to the Sunday for the cultivation of such provision grounds, nor to any compensation for the requisite time during the six working days which he might appropriate to the slave in the lieu of Sunday for that purpose. And he added the expression of his hope, "that no Christian master would so far forget himself as to claim indemnity for what *his religion*" (the law of his God) "must have taught him he ought never to have required;" his Lordship, in short, thus pronouncing the practice to be a usurpation on the rights of our fellow creatures, and a violation of the divine law.

In the case of Trinidad, the British Government had not hitherto forbidden the master to require that his slave should cultivate, on the Sunday, the provisions which were to support him while at work in the cane piece during the other six days of the week; and in point of fact, he had been in the regular habit of requiring it. And yet no one will venture to say, that his Majesty's Government acted either illegally or unjustly, in forbidding the planters of Trinidad to continue to *compel* the slave to work for them on the Sunday; in obliging them, nevertheless, either to find him in food, or in time and land for its cultivation; and in rejecting, at the same time, their claim to any pecuniary indemnity whatever on account of such an arrangement.

It is obvious that this reasoning is no less applicable to every Slave Colony belonging to the British crown than to Trinidad; and the principle on which it proceeds, and on which the decision of his Majesty's Government in this instance rests for its justification, is one which may legitimately be extended to a variety of other points connected with the right of property in slaves.

It will not be asserted, that in Demarara, any more than in Trinidad, the master's right of property extends to compelling the slave to labour for him on the Sunday. Even if such a practice had immemorially existed, it would not thereby have been rendered rightful, neither would its instant and entire abolition, by the power of the state, give the owner any just claim to compensation. It would not be enough for the Demarara Planters to apply to this case the language which on the general question of Slavery they have addressed to the mother country: "*You encouraged us to buy slaves, and to employ them in cultivation; and now, if you interfere in their management, or deprive us of any part of their time, which we have hitherto appropriated to our own use,*

you must first provide compensation." To such a claim the mother country would clearly be entitled to reply, "I encouraged you, it is true, to buy slaves and to employ them in cultivation; and I therefore feel that, in forcibly putting a period to Slavery, I am bound to bear the loss in common with you. But *I* gave you no licence to deprive the slave of his Sunday. *I* gave you no authority to exact his toil on that day for your own benefit. I did not even know you had done so. Sunday is his own, by every law divine and human; and you not only have no right to claim indemnity for his being restored to the possession of it, but you ought to indemnify him for your unjust and protracted usurpation of it for your own benefit."

But may we not go still farther, and ask whether there be any thing in the right of property possessed by the Demarara Planter over his slave, which, while the mother country may lawfully interfere to secure to that slave the full enjoyment of the repose of the Sabbath, does not equally permit her to interfere to secure to him all his equally indubitable rights, and to redress all his real wrongs, whatever may be the alleged pecuniary loss arising from such interference?

Suppose, for example, it were clearly proved, that in Demarara the established hours of labour were so many, or the tasks exacted from the labourer so severe, or the food given to him so scanty, that the lives of the slaves were greatly shortened thereby; the mortality thus produced far exceeding the average rate of mortality under similar circumstances:—in that case, would not the supreme authority have a right to say to the planter, You shall increase the food of the slaves; you shall abridge their hours of labour; you shall lighten their tasks? And would it be deemed a satisfactory plea against the legality of such an interference, were the planters to say, "The slaves are *our fee simple absolute; our chattels*: they have hitherto yielded us, say thirteen or fourteen or fifteen hours labour in the day, and have received from us fourteen pounds of flour, or so many plantains a week. If you cut down the labour to ten hours instead of fifteen, and raise the allowance to twenty-one pounds of flour instead of fourteen, we shall be immense losers;—we shall be ruined; and must have compensation for our loss. The produce of our estates will be diminished one-third, and the charge of feeding our slaves will be increased one-half—and to this extent we must be indemnified; for the guilt of Slavery is yours as well as ours. You must therefore bear the loss, and give us compensation." To such a claim as this also, might it not be justly said in reply, "No—you are bound, and always were bound, to act justly and humanely towards your

slaves; you are bound not to wear out their lives prematurely by excessive labour; you are bound to feed the human cattle who till your grounds with food sufficient for them. All this you are bound, and have always been bound to do, independently of any specific law; and if you have not done it, you have been equally guilty of violating the rights of the slaves with those who have deprived them of their Sunday. If we gave you a licence to buy and hold slaves, we gave you no licence to overwork or underfeed them; to kill them by inches; to extinguish their procreative powers, or destroy their health, or waste their lives by severity of labour and scantiness of food. You must regulate both their food and their labour, not by your past scale of profits, nor by your past practice, but by a consideration of what is right in itself; and, for doing this, which you ought always to have done, you cannot claim, neither shall you receive any compensation, but, on the contrary, punishment, if not for your past misconduct, yet for any future failure in your duty."

Now this hypothetical case is, in some material respects, the case of Demarara and of our other Colonies. The labour exacted from the slaves, and the food given them, be they more or less than has been supposed, are proved, by the result, to be inconsistent with a healthful state of population, and to produce effects that are wasteful of human life. And will it be permitted that the right of property which the Demarara Planters claim in their slaves shall be pleaded in bar of the measures necessary for preventing this waste, whatever pecuniary loss may attend those measures? And if not, what line is to limit the right of interference? Is not the State bound to cause the Planters to adopt measures for the intellectual and moral improvement, as well as for the physical comforts of their slaves; and may they not be fairly subjected to the same obligation of providing the means of education and instruction, for the labourers who till their grounds, which attaches to the landowners of Great Britain?

Thus it is clear, therefore, that there are various and peculiar modifications which go to affect that alleged right of property in human beings, which the Demarara Planters affirm to be absolute and unconditional, and *to stand on the very same foundation with every other description of property*; and for which modifications no compensation can be claimed, on account of any loss they may cause to the master.

Subject, however, to these general qualifications, we are ready, for the purpose of the present discussion, to admit that the Planters of Demarara have a vested interest in their slaves, which the legislature is

bound to respect ; and that if, by any of its acts, their property in slaves should be so dealt with as to subject them to pecuniary loss, the general principles of English legislation require that a fair compensation should be awarded to them. This principle, we admit also, has been recognized in the Resolutions of May, 1823. But then its recognition there does not imply, as the Petitioners allege, that indemnity should precede, but that it should, as in every other case, accompany or follow, the particular act by which injury may be inflicted. Admitting the slave to be *property*, it is surely enough that he should stand on the same equitable footing with every other species of property which, with a view to the public good, it may be necessary to appropriate to public purposes. If an Act of Parliament, for example, takes from an individual a portion of his land, it insures him a fair indemnity, by judicial appraisement. And, it is on this recognized principle that the Government have proceeded in framing the clause mentioned above, in the Trinidad Order in Council, respecting the manumission of Slaves. In order to prevent this measure of public policy, which the Government and the Parliament have adopted, from being attended with loss to individuals, they have provided, that no man shall be divested of his slave without an equivalent, and have fixed the mode of ascertaining by an impartial appraisement what that equivalent shall be.

It is not easy to conceive any mode by which indemnity could have been more completely secured to the owner than this ; and yet the Demarara Planter bitterly complains of it as unjust. He complains, that is to say, that with a view to a great measure of State policy, his slave, who is his property, may be taken from him without his consent, and even against his consent. This may be hard ; but still it is no more than is done, when any measure of public policy requires it, with respect to all those other descriptions of property to which he himself anxiously assimilates his slave. If one of his houses must be pulled down, or one of his fields taken from him, for some public purpose, he is divested of such property, without his consent, and even against his consent ; and is obliged to accept in return, the price of it, not as estimated by himself, but as estimated by disinterested appraisers, who assign to him the fair marketable value of the article of which he has been so deprived. And the Demarara Planter, who maintains that his slave stands on *the very same* footing with every other species of property, cannot complain that that slave should be dealt with in the same way as his horse, or his house, or his field, which may be required for the public service.

The Demarara Planters, indeed, vehemently maintain that *the pro-*

posed system trenches upon their right of property. But, if the same equitable mode of assessing the loss, and providing an indemnity is pursued in this as in every other instance, in which private considerations are made to give way to public interests, it is not very obvious that they can have any just ground of complaint.

It is due, however, to the Planters of Demarara and Berbice, to consider more particularly the specific objections they make to this measure, and to ascertain how far they are well or ill founded.

These objections are of two kinds :—First, objections which apply to the general policy of any measures for facilitating or quickening the enfranchisement of the slaves ; and secondly, objections which respect the sufficiency of the indemnity which it is proposed to give to the master. We shall consider these in their order.

I. Objections to the general policy of facilitating manumission.

1. The first objection of the petitioners to the general policy of adopting the clause in the Trinidad Order on the subject of manumission, is, that it is a departure from that wise and sound maxim, pronounced, they say, to be so by Lord Bathurst, which has enounced, that “ *the condition of the slave is only to be improved through the medium of his master ;*” whereas, in this case, the benefit, if benefit it be, is to be conferred independently of the master and even against his will. Of this pretended maxim, however, both the wisdom and the truth may be justly questioned. That the happiness of the slave is in the *power* of the master, cannot indeed be denied. Possessed of despotic authority the master has it without doubt in his *power* to render the condition of his slave miserable. He has it also in his power, though not in the same degree (for slavery is a very intractable subject) to improve the condition of his slave, and to alleviate its hardships. But the present question refers not so much to the *power*, as to the *will* of the master. And in that view, it may without hesitation be affirmed, that if “ *the condition of the slave is only to be improved through the medium of the master,*” it will never be improved at all. Since the world first began, when have men been known voluntarily to divest themselves of despotic authority, or to abridge their capacity of inflicting pain ? What is there which equally with despotism, corrupts the human heart, and disinclines it to the benevolent work of raising, protecting, and comforting its degraded, impotent, and wretched thralls ? The history of the world, still more the history of slavery in all ages, and above all the history of West India slavery, furnish one unvarying contradiction to this unfounded maxim,

The conduct of the dominant party in the West Indies, from the moment that slavery was first instituted there to the present hour, is an unequivocal demonstration of its falsehood. Its absolute refutation may be read in the barbarous and sanguinary laws, which from the first have polluted and which still pollute the colonial statute books, (all of them framed by the masters alone ;)—in the cruelties nicknamed *exemplary*, with which it was customary in all the colonies to punish the slightest movement against the master's authority, or the attempt to escape from it ;*—in the furious clamours raised against every effort, however temperate, to reform this nefarious system ;—in the determined resistance shewn to all improvement whenever resistance was deemed safe and practicable, or in the artful evasion of it, when open resistance was hazardous ;—in the reluctance with which any concession to humanity and justice, however small, has at any time been made ;—and in the determined struggle still maintained, to prevent all legislative ameliorations, or, if forced to adopt them in form, to render them wholly inefficient in their spirit and operation. We believe it would be difficult to find a single instance, even of any specious though hollow and worthless semblance of improvement, which has not been forced upon the masters by a higher power, or extorted from them by the fear of that power's authoritative interference. Even in Demarara and Berbice, the only alleviations of slavery introduced there, have emanated directly, not from the masters, but from the States General of Holland.

It were easy to cite numerous authorities in confirmation of this view of the subject. But let one suffice. It is that of Mr. Canning, one of our most distinguished and now most lamented statesmen, who in an admirable speech on the Slave Trade in the year 1799, thus adjured the House of Commons ; “ *Trust not the masters of slaves,*” said this enlightened statesman, “ *in what concerns legislation for slavery. However specious their laws may appear, depend upon it they must be ineffectual in their operation. It is in the nature of things that they should be so.*” “ *There is something in the nature of absolute authority, in the relation between master and slave, which makes despotism, in all cases, and under all circumstances, an incompetent and unsure executor, even of its own provisions in favour of the objects of its power.*” The philosophical truth and accuracy of these sentiments are as unquestionable, as the eloquence with which they are expressed. They irresistibly carry conviction along with them. In them he “being dead, yet speaketh.”

* See Edwards's History, Book IV. Chap. iii. Negro Slavery Tract, No. vi. &c.

It is the more necessary to expose the unsoundness of this vaunted maxim of the Demarara planters, because some such delusive view of the subject may have unhappily been imbibed even by some of our statesmen, who, in opposition to all fact and experience, as well as to all general principle, may have permitted themselves to hope that an improvement in the condition of the slaves is to be effected through the medium of the masters. They ought at length to be aware that by the masters it will never be effected. How it may be effected without them, and even against them, is a question on which we have no objection fully to enter. At present it would lead us away from our purpose. We will only remark that, with respect to the particular measure now under discussion, namely that of securing to the slave a *legal* right to effect his redemption at a fair price, without the consent of his master, it will never, we fear, be conceded by the planters of the British West Indies, and least of all by those of Demarara. It must be made the subject of positive enactment by a superior authority. Thus it was in the Spanish and Portuguese Colonies; and thus it must be in ours, if we would not abandon the single slender hope which it affords of putting an end, at any time however distant, to the evil of Colonial Slavery.

2. A second objection may be thus stated. *In the lowlands of tropical climates, steady labour in the sun is only to be obtained by means of coercion; therefore the cultivation of the West Indies could not possibly be maintained, if the slaves were converted into freemen; as in that case they would not be induced to labour beyond what was required to sustain life.* The authority chiefly adduced by the learned counsel Mr. Adam, in support of this opinion, was that of Major Moody, on whose testimony great stress was laid. Those who wish to see that gentleman's views fully examined and refuted, may consult the Edinburgh Review, No. XC.

The proposition thus enounced, however, is contradicted by experience. The climate of Hindostan lies in the same latitude, and is as oppressively hot as that of our West India Colonies. Yet it does not prevent the natives of that country, who are not slaves, but freemen, from labouring assiduously and steadily, not only in manufactures, but in agriculture also. The inhabitants of even temperate climates do not labour more strenuously in the cultivation of the soil than do the inhabitants of the southern provinces of China. And if it be alleged that there the great density of the population, pressing on the means of subsistence, produces all the effect of physical coer-

cion, yet the same reasoning can neither be applied in the same degree to Hindostan, nor to two other instances which we are about to cite. The first is given to us by Baron Humboldt, and is as follows. Speaking of tropical South America, he says,

“ We observed with a lively interest the great number of scattered houses in the valley inhabited by freed-men. In the Spanish colonies, the institutions and the manners are more favourable to the liberty of the Blacks than in the other European settlements. In all these excursions we were agreeably surprised, not only at the progress of agriculture, but the increase of a free, laborious population accustomed to toil, and too poor to rely on the assistance of slaves. White and Black farmers had every where small separate establishments. Our host, whose father had a revenue of 40,000 piastres, possessing more lands than he could clear, he distributed them in the valley of Aragua* among poor families who chose to apply themselves to the cultivation of cotton. He endeavoured to surround his ample plantations with freemen, who working as they chose either on their own land or in the neighbouring plantations, supplied him with day-labourers at the time of harvest. Nobly occupied on the means best adapted gradually to extinguish the slavery of the Blacks in these colonies, Count Torur flattered himself with the double hope of rendering slaves less necessary to the landholders, and furnishing the freed-men with opportunities of becoming farmers. On departing for Europe, he had parcelled out and let a part of the lands of Cura. Four years after, at his return to America, he found on this spot, finely cultivated in cotton, a little hamlet of thirty or forty houses, which is called Punta Zamuro, and which we afterwards visited with him. The inhabitants of this hamlet are nearly all Mulattoes, Zumboes, or free Blacks. This example of letting out land has been happily followed by other great proprietors. The rent is ten piastres for a vanega of ground, and is paid in money or in cotton. As the small farmers are often in want, they sell their cotton at a very moderate price. They sell it even before the harvest; and the advances thus made by rich neighbours, place the debtor in a state of dependence, which frequently obliges him to offer his services as a labourer. The price of labour is cheaper here than in France. A freeman working as a day-labourer (Peon) is paid in the valleys of Aragua and in the Llanos four or five piastres a month,

* Situated in the province of New Granada, between the latitudes of 4° and 6° North.

not including food, which is very cheap on account of the abundance of meat and vegetables. I love to dwell on these details of colonial industry, because they prove to the inhabitants of Europe, what to the enlightened inhabitants of the colonies has long ceased to be doubtful, that the continent of Spanish America can produce sugar and indigo by free hands, and that the unhappy slaves are capable of becoming peasants, farmers, and landholders."

The second instance is of a still more decisive kind. It refers to the Island of Java, which lies between the latitudes of 6° and 9° South, and which must therefore be one of the hottest countries in the world. In what we are about to state respecting it, we quote the History of that Island by Sir Stamford Raffles. Its population according to him amounts to between four and five millions, (vol. i. p. 65.) of whom only 27,000 are slaves, and these are held by the Europeans and Chinese alone, and are not employed in agriculture, but almost exclusively for domestic purposes. The cultivation of this rich and extensive Island is wholly carried on by a free peasantry who reside in villages, and whose happy condition Sir Stamford seems to delight in describing. (Ib. p. 76 to 82.)

"In the first establishment or formation of a village on new ground, the intended settlers take care to provide themselves with sufficient garden ground round their huts for their stock, and to supply the ordinary wants of their families. The produce of this plantation is the exclusive property of the peasant, and is exempted from contribution or burden; and such is their number and extent that in some regencies they constitute a tenth part of the area of the whole district. The spot surrounding his simple habitation, the cottager considers his peculiar patrimony, and cultivates with peculiar care. He labours to plant and to rear in it those vegetables that may be most useful to his family, and those shrubs and trees which may at once yield him their fruit and their shade; nor does he waste his efforts on a thankless soil. The cottages or the assemblage of huts that compose the village, become thus completely screened from the rays of a scorching sun, and are so buried amid the foliage of a luxuriant vegetation that at a small distance no appearance of a human dwelling can be discovered, and the residence of a numerous society appears only a verdant grove or a clump of evergreens. Nothing can exceed the beauty or the interest which such detached masses of verdure, scattered over the face of the country, and indicating each the abode of a collection of happy peasantry add to scenery otherwise rich."

"Every village forms a community within itself, having each its vil-

lage officers and priest. Here is found that simple form of patriarchal administration, which so forcibly strikes the imagination of the civilized inhabitants of this quarter of the world, and which has so long been the theme of interest and curiosity, to those who have visited the Indian Continent." *Ib.* p. 82.

"The natives of Java are, in general, better clothed than those of Western India." "It is part of the domestic economy that the women of the family should provide the men with the cloths necessary for their apparel, and from the first consort of the Sovereign to the wife of the lowest peasant, the same rule is observed. In every cottage there is a spinning wheel and loom; and in all ranks a man is accustomed to pride himself on the beauty of a cloth woven either by his wife, mistress, or daughter." *Ib.* p. 86.

"The island of Java is a great agricultural country: its soil is the grand source of its wealth. *In its cultivation the inhabitants exert their chief industry*, and upon its produce they rely, not only for their subsistence, but for the articles of foreign luxury or convenience which they purchase. *The Javans are a nation of husbandmen*, and exhibit that simple structure of society incident to such a stage of its progress. To the crop, the mechanic looks immediately for his wages, the soldier for his pay, the magistrate for his salary, the priest for his stipend, and the Government for its tribute. The wealth of a province or village is measured" (not by its slaves, though it is a tropical island, but) "by the extent and fertility of its land, its facilities for rice irrigation, and the number of its buffaloes." *Ib.* p. 106.

Nine-tenths of the population are employed in agriculture. *Ib.* p. 107. Again, "Java is a great agricultural country. It has been considered as the granary of the Eastern Islands." *Ib.* p. 195.

"The sugar cane is extensively cultivated in this island," p. 125, "and may be grown to any extent demanded," p. 212. "There are numerous manufactories for its juice, principally owned by the Chinese, both in the vicinity of Batavia and in Jopara and Pasuruan, and partially in other districts of the Eastern provinces. Previous to the disturbances in Cheribon, sugar likewise, was manufactured in that district in considerable quantities, and furnished an important article of export." P. 125. See also p. 176. "Large quantities of Java sugar have been exported to Bombay;" p. 212. and 7000 tons of it were sold in one year to the Americans alone. P. 213.

"The land allotted to each separate cultivator is managed by himself exclusively, and the practice of labouring in common, which is usual

among the inhabitants of the same village, on continental India, is here unknown. Every one, generally speaking, has his own field, his own plough, his own buffaloes or oxen, prepares his farm with his own hand, or the assistance of his family at seed time, and reaps it by the same means at harvest." P. 146.

Sir Stamford Raffles then proceeds to shew how the industry of the Javan cultivators had been repressed by the shameless exactions of the native Governments and the Dutch Company, who "employed all the machinery of despotism to squeeze from the people their utmost mite of contribution, the last dregs of their labour." P. 151.

This system of gross oppression and undefined exaction was put an end to by the British Government. The effect, we are told, exceeded the most sanguine expectations. Sir S. Raffles himself was a pleased spectator of its beneficial tendency, and of the security and satisfaction it universally diffused; promoting the prosperity, improvement, and happiness of the people, increasing the revenue, augmenting the exportable produce, and diminishing crime. If the Dutch Government did but adhere to the same just and wise policy, as it seems they profess to do, the happiest effects, he conceived, would follow. P. 160, &c.

A part, at least, of the following apology, of this truly able and excellent and lamented individual, on behalf of the Javans, will be found to apply with equal force to the charges of the Demarara Planters against the free negro of the West Indies.

"Much has been said of the indolence of the Javans by those who deprived them of all motives for industry. I enter a broad denial of the charge. They are as industrious and laborious as any people could be expected to be in their circumstances of insecurity and oppression, or as any people would be required to be, with their advantages of soil and climate. If they do not labour during the whole day, it is because such persevering toil is unnecessary, or would bring them no additional enjoyments. The best refutation of the charge of indolence is to be found in the extent of their cultivation, the well-dressed appearance of their rice fields, and the abundant supplies of their harvests. They generally rise by day-light. At half-past six they go out to the rice fields, where they employ their buffaloes till ten; when they return home, bathe, and refresh themselves with a meal. During the violent heat of the noon they remain under the shade of their houses or village trees, making baskets, mending their implements of husbandry, or engaged in other necessary avocations, and at about four return to the sawahs (or rice fields) to labour them without buffaloes or other cattle. At six, they

return to their homes, sup, and spend the remainder of their time till the hour of rest, (which is generally between eight and nine,) in little parties for amusement or conversation, when the whole village becomes a scene of quiet content, and pleasure. The same round of toil and relaxation is observed during the season for garden culture, dry field labour, or other employments. Under this system the villagers seem to enjoy a greater degree of happiness than they 'could derive from those increased means that would result from increased exertion. I can bear testimony to their general cheerfulness, contentedness, and good humour; for having visited their villages at all seasons, and often when least expected, or entirely unknown, I have always found them pleased and satisfied with their lot when engaged at their work, or social and festive in their hours of pleasure." P. 232.

Can it be doubted that the moderate and regular labour of this free peasantry, as described by Sir Stamford Raffles, under which they increase, by his account, very rapidly, is to be infinitely preferred, even with a view to its commercial and political advantages, to the incessant compulsory toil of the Demarara slaves, which is no less rapidly wearing them down and wasting their numbers.

The testimony of Mr. Botham, before the Privy Council in 1789, will furnish a very convenient supplement to that of Sir Stamford Raffles. He is speaking of considerable sugar estates which exist near Batavia. "The proprietor," he says, "is generally a rich Dutchman, who has built on it substantial works. He lets the estate (say of 300 or more acres) to a Chinese, who lives on and superintends it, and who relets it to free men in parcels of 50 or 60 acres, on condition that they shall plant it in canes, for so much for every *pecul* ($133\frac{1}{2}$ avoirdupois) of sugar produced. The superintendant collects people from the adjacent village to take off his crop. One set of taskmen, with their carts and buffaloes, cut the canes, carry them to the mill and grind them; a second set boil them; a third clay and basket them for market, at so much a *pecul*. Thus the renter knows with certainty what every *pecul* will cost him. He has no unnecessary expense; for when the crop is over, the taskmen go home; and for seven months in the year, there only remain on the estate the cane planters preparing the next crop. The price of common labour is from 9*d.* to 10*d.* a day; but the taskmen gain considerably more, not only from extra work, but from being considered artists in their several branches." "The cane is cultivated to the utmost perfection in Batavia. The hoe, almost the only implement of the west, is there scarcely used. The lands are well ploughed by a light plough

with a single buffalo." Much more is added on the culture of the cane and the manufacture of sugar and rum, which the West Indians would do well to study.

Satisfactory, however, as these examples may prove to candid and dispassionate minds, they will probably be objected to by the Demarara Planters, as not bearing a strict analogy to the case of the West Indies. Whatever may be the fact in other parts of the world, and with respect to other races of men, they are disposed to maintain, that the negro race whether slave or free, can only be excited to exertion by coercive means. No industry is to be expected from *them* beyond what may be required for the bare supply of their animal wants. In a climate which renders ease so desirable, and toil so painful, *they* will not be influenced by the motives which, in other cases, stimulate to exertion, and lead to the accumulation of wealth; and will be rather content to live in idleness, looking beyond this for no enjoyments, and aiming at no improvement.

Such is in substance the view which has been taken of this question by the Demarara planters, and which was urged with much force by their leading advocate; it deserves therefore a careful consideration.

3. Let us first consider the question as it respects *the negro in a state of slavery*, and enquire whether there be any motives besides those of coercion, or the cravings of mere animal appetite, which are capable of exciting him to industrious effort.

Here however we think it right to guard against that abuse of terms which, in the West Indian vocabulary, dignifies with the name of industry, the labour extracted from the slaves by the cartwhip. Industry implies not a forced but a willing effort; an effort made, not for the purpose merely of escaping the lash, or of satisfying hunger, but for that of attaining some desired and higher good. If therefore we are to estimate the industry of which the negroes are capable, we admit that we must take into account, not their forced services, but their voluntary sacrifices of time and ease, and those voluntary exertions that are called forth by the same moral motives which influence free agents in the other classes of mankind.

In order to refute the position respecting the incurable indolence of the negro, it would be sufficient to cite the facts brought forward, on a variety of occasions, by the West Indians themselves. They tell us, with almost one voice, that the slaves are fully fed and clothed by their masters—a circumstance which, according to the theory we are combating, would take away all motive to labour which was not the result of coercion. And yet they tell us, that, nevertheless, multitudes of them

employ their small pittance of leisure time so industriously, and to such advantage, that they abound in wealth and luxuries. The slaves are restrained by the most severe laws, not only in Demarara and Berbice, but in all the other Colonies, from growing sugar, cotton, coffee, cocoa, or any other exportable produce;* but we are told that they raise, in considerable quantities, for their own benefit, whatever they *dare* to cultivate, such as vegetable provisions, fruit, &c. besides breeding pigs and poultry, with all which they largely supply the Sunday markets. If this statement be true, and it is the statement of the West Indians themselves, then it is obvious that the negroes are susceptible of the force of moral motives; for without this, what could be the inducement for men in a tropical climate, who are exhausted by constant and hard labour to which they are driven by the cart-whip, and who are not compelled (as is asserted) by hunger, or any other physical want, to employ that fragment of leisure, which they might naturally be expected to give to the paramount enjoyment of repose, in raising those quantities of yams, plantains, oranges, pine apples, pigs and poultry, with which they so abundantly supply the markets, and for which they obtain mere superfluities and luxuries in exchange. Abundance of West India testimony has been adduced to prove that such is the case. Hosts of affidavits to that effect have been transmitted from Jamaica, Barbadoes, and even Demarara; and these affidavits are confirmed by Major Moody, who, in one of his elaborate Reports, has endeavoured, with extraordinary ingenuity and perseverance, to prove that the negro will not labour voluntarily, or for wages; and yet, as if he were fated to save his opponents the trouble of demolishing his theories, he brings forward, in the very same Report, a statement of the large property possessed by the twelve or fifteen hundred families of slaves who inhabit Tortola, which was the fruit of their own voluntary industry, during their short intervals of relaxation from their master's service, they also being fed and clothed by their masters. The statement is so curious, and so

* The following is the law of Demarara on this point.—“ All slaves, as well males as females, are prohibited from selling or bartering, *with any one whatever, any produce*—sugar, coffee, cocoa, indigo, rokow, syrup, rum, bottles or flasks, or any thing else; being permitted to sell only vegetables and ground provisions, the produce of their gardens, or stock which they are allowed to rear; on pain of being severely flogged on the plantations to which they belong, for the first offence; and for the second to be punished by sentence of the Court, according to the exigency of the case.”

decisive of the very point at issue, that it deserves to be exhibited entire on this occasion.

STATEMENT OF VISIBLE PROPERTY POSSESSED BY THE SLAVES
OF TORTOLA.

	Sterling.
38 Horses at 7 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i> each . . .	£285 0
938 Head of horned cattle, at 5 <i>l.</i> . .	4690 0
2125 Goats at 10 <i>s.</i>	1002 10
1208 Pigs at 10 <i>s.</i>	604 0
33,120 Poultry at 1 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>	2484 0
23 Boats, at 5 <i>l.</i>	115 0
Fish pots and fishing tackle . . .	123 10
Buildings, chiefly in town . . .	700 0
Furniture, utensils, &c. . . .	4968 0
	<hr/>
	£15,032 0
	<hr/>

“In the above,” it is added, “I have not estimated the disposable portion of esculents and fruits, and of cotton, raised by slaves. They cultivate on their own account, about 1,675 acres of land, which is estimated to yield annually, 3*l.* 10*s.* sterling per acre, in total, 5,862*l.* 10*s.* After supporting themselves, the surplus they dispose of at market, *which amounts to a very considerable sum.* The industrious also possess, in cash, considerable sums. I am fully satisfied they are possessed of capital, arising from the sale of stock and crop, to fully the amount of 5000*l.* sterling.”—*Parliamentary papers of 16th of March, 1825, No. 115, p. 152.*

No one, of course, can be so absurd as to argue, that although the enslaved negroes of Tortola work, thus diligently, without the propelling power of the cart-whip, or the urgency of hunger, in order to obtain luxuries or accumulate wealth, yet that they will not work for the same wealth, if offered them in the shape of wages. It would require something more than the new “philosophy of labour,” of which so much has been heard of late, to convince any man of sense in this country, that if a negro will work industriously, from moral motives, on a Sunday or half Saturday, though subjected to severe, compulsory, and uncompensated toil on all other days, he will not feel the influence of the same motives if presented to him on the days now occupied in his master’s service.

We might be content to end the discussion here, our point being

proved by the West Indians themselves. It may be useful, however, to shew, and particularly in reference to the present question, to what a degree the industry of the enslaved negro may be excited, when, by facilities being granted to manumission, a rational hope is held out to him of obtaining it by his own exertions.

We affirm then, that when facilities have been given them of obtaining their freedom, their voluntary industry has been thereby greatly augmented. In Demarara, indeed, every possible obstacle has been placed in the way of the slave obtaining his liberty. He has had no time allowed him as in other Colonies, all his time being occupied exclusively in his master's service. He has had no provision grounds of his own allotted to him; but, like the horse or the mule of his master, has had his daily food dealt out to him from the stores or the plantain walk of the estate. With such a destitution of all means of accumulating property, the price to be paid for his liberty has been enhanced three or four fold, as compared with some other Colonies, by the value his labour acquires from the fertility of the soil he cultivates. Even if his master has desired to emancipate him, the law has obstructed his purpose, and the consent of the Governor, and the Court of Policy has been made indispensable. To the naturally high price of the slave, there has also been superadded an enormous tax, the amount of which must also have been earned by the poor slave before he could achieve his liberty. Such was the state of things in Demarara as respected manumission, prior to 1826. Can we wonder then, that under these circumstances, the whole number of manumissions which had taken place in Demarara, in a population of upwards of 75,000 slaves in the five preceding years, from 1821 to 1825, should have been only 142, (twenty-eight annually) being at the rate of $\frac{1}{500}$ per cent. per annum, or one per cent. in twenty-eight years. And of this small number of manumissions, almost all were owing, not to the industry of the enslaved negro, but to the vices of the free white. They consist chiefly of the enslaved concubines, or of the illicit offspring of enslaved mothers by European fathers. The number of those who have redeemed themselves by the produce of their own industry, and the savings of their own frugality, out of this large mass, appears to have been, at the utmost, eleven or twelve.*

Is it surprising that, under these hopeless, not to say desperate circumstances, the Demarara Planters should have witnessed few or no proofs of industry in the negro slave? What object has he had before

* Parliamentary Papers for 1827, No. 128, p. 25.

him, exhausted with incessant toil for his master's sole benefit, to excite his industry? Freedom seemed placed beyond his reach, and to be, in fact, unattainable. For, even if he should have been able to scrape together the means of purchasing it, at the enormous price it bore, and of paying besides the enormous tax upon it, his master might have refused to grant it; and even if his master should have agreed to give him his liberty, it might have been refused to him by the Court of Policy. It would be the very height of absurdity to affect to expect industry from persons placed under such a constitution of things as this.

Now let us contrast with Demarara, the small colony of Honduras. There, no unnecessary obstacle appears to have been raised to manumissions, excepting what might have arisen from the largeness of the price demanded for it by the cupidity of the individual owner, or from the indolence of the slave himself. No tax is imposed upon it. The slaves, besides being supplied with provisions, are allowed the use of land, and time to cultivate it. Two days in the week, Saturday and Sunday, are wholly given up to them, during which they may employ themselves in any way they may deem most advantageous, not being debarred, as in Demarara, from any of the ordinary sources of profit enjoyed by the whites. They may hire themselves to their own masters, or to any one else who will employ them; or they may cultivate the ground for their own use, or for purposes of sale; or they may rear stock.* And what is the result of these facilities of acquiring property, and of the absence of all factitious impediments to manumission? It is an annual enfranchisement of more than one per cent. of the population. In Demarara, the annual enfranchisement is one in about 2800. In Honduras, it is more than one in 100, being more than twenty-eight times as many in proportion as in Demarara.

There is another remarkable difference between Demarara and Honduras. The manumissions in Demarara are chiefly effected by white fathers, or paramours, and seldom by the labour of the slaves themselves. In Honduras the manumissions are, in many cases, the fruit of the industry and frugality of the manumitted individuals; by means of the one day in the week, exclusive of Sunday, which is appropriated to their own purposes. The value of such a privilege is incalculable. It extinguishes half the difference between a state of slavery and freedom; and yet it is a privilege which, it is to be feared, neither

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 433, of 10th June, 1818, p. 115, &c.

the planters of Demarara nor of the other West India Colonies will be willing to give to their slaves, although both Mr. Canning and Lord Bathurst assured Parliament and the country, that a day in lieu of the Sunday, would be given to them.*

The extraordinary effect produced by the possession, exclusively for their own purposes, of that single day, will be better understood when we look at the prices which, through the industrious employment of it, the slaves of Honduras have been able to give for their freedom, and the enormity of which ought not to be overlooked. One man is stated to have paid 225*l.* for his freedom, another 250*l.* and another 300*l.* One man, continuing a slave himself, buys his wife's freedom for 100*l.*; and another that of a son at the same price. Several women pay for themselves 100*l.* each, and one as much as 200*l.* These prices, however, high as they are, † are brought within the reach of the slaves, simply in consequence of the scope afforded to their industry, by giving them a day in the week besides Sunday. The time allowed even to them, it must be admitted, is scanty enough. Five days of the week are given wholly to the master, and only one to themselves besides Sunday; and yet, other difficulties and discouragements being removed, hope is awakened; and, under its influence, such is the industry and the providence they exercise, that they are enabled not only to aim at great accumulations, but to effect them. Let it be kept in view that, under this better system, manumissions have proceeded with 28 times the rapidity at Honduras as in Demarara. And no one has ventured to allege that this comparative rapidity of manumissions has ever endangered the peace, or marred the prosperity, or aggravated the demoralization of the colony of Honduras.

This view of the subject is abundantly confirmed by what has occurred in Demarara itself since the 1st of January 1826. On that day the new Order in Council came into operation there, and although it did not contain the clause which gives to slaves the right of redeeming themselves at a fair appraisement, and without the consent of the master; yet it took away the power of preventing manumissions which had been enjoyed by the Governor and the Court of Policy, and it entirely abolished those iniquitous taxes and fees which had hitherto

* See Speech of Mr. Canning, Debate of May 15, 1823, p. 31,—and preface to that debate, p. xxxi.

† The above sums are in Honduras currency, the proportion of which to sterling is either about 150*l.* per cent. as in Jamaica, or 200*l.* per cent. as in the other Islands, probably the former.

so greatly enhanced the cost of freedom. Even of these new facilities, limited as they are, the effect has been most remarkable. Between the 1st of January and the 31st of May 1826, a space of only five months, the number of manumissions have amounted to 243, being one hundred more than had been manumitted in the preceding five years.

Let us look at another case, that of Trinidad. In this Island out of a population of about 23,500, 631 manumissions were effected in the five years from 1821 to 1825, being at the rate of 126 annually, or more than $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum, when in Demarara containing 75,000 slaves the rate during the same period was about 28 annually, or 1-28th per cent. per annum, being a rate more than fourteen times as great in Trinidad as in Demarara.

In Trinidad, however, there existed no obstacle to manumission excepting either the unwillingness of the master, in cases where manumission was to be his gift; or the indolence of the slave, when the purchase was to be effected by the fruit of his industry. Of the 631 persons thus emancipated 324 purchased their own freedom at the aggregate cost of 50,434*l.* currency, or an average of 154*l.* 14*s.* currency, or about 70*l.* sterling each. The effort of industry to which these 326 individuals were excited in order to raise this sum, they would have had little or no motive to make, but for the comparative facilities afforded to manumission in this island by the absence of all tax upon it, and for the state of the law which gives to the slave the *right* of redeeming himself and the members of his family.

In Trinidad, however, the slaves labour under some serious disadvantages as compared with the slaves in Honduras. Their labour for their masters is far more destructive of life, and consequently it must be far more adverse to the capacity of voluntary effort. It is so destructive, that in Trinidad the decrease amounts to $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. per annum, while in Honduras it is only $\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. The dreadful mortality of Trinidad is obviously the effect of sugar culture on a soil peculiarly fertile; and it must necessarily tend to that exhaustion of the physical strength which takes away the power as well as lessens the inclination of voluntary exertion. The slaves in Trinidad, moreover, are not fed by the master as in Honduras, except perhaps with a little salt fish. They support themselves by food raised on land allotted to them, and which they have had Sunday, and some additional days in the year, but not a whole day in each week, to cultivate. The slaves in Honduras, besides being fed by the master, have had Sunday and another day in the week for their own purposes. Neither the Sunday however, nor the additional week

days, (the number of which is not stated, but it is supposed to be sixteen) given to the slave in Trinidad, were given him for his own purposes, but to raise the food required for his whole sustentation, which whole sustentation it is in fact the master's duty to provide. His means of accumulation therefore, as compared with the slave in Honduras, have been very greatly abridged; and yet such has been the effect produced, in exciting his industry, by the removal of all other obstructions to manumission, that a sum of about £10,000 currency, a year, has been applied, by slaves in Trinidad, to their own redemption, during each of the years from 1821 to 1825.

These facts, and if we were to go through the whole of the West India islands they might be multiplied, will sufficiently shew, that when, by giving facilities to manumission, the spring of hope is once permitted to operate on the mind of the enslaved negro, such an impulse is given to his industry,—to his voluntary exertion,—as produces almost incredible results.*

4. But the Demarara planters will probably admit that the negro slave will make great exertions for the sake of purchasing his freedom; but that, having obtained it, he will no longer labour for any other object beyond the supply of his animal necessities, but will cease to be industrious, and relapse into absolute indolence. This seems to be what they mean, when they affirm that by giving facilities to manumission the industry of the free negro “will be impaired, he being so averse to labour in the field, that he cannot be induced to work for hire, or to carry on the cultivation of the country in a regular or effectual manner.”

Here it would have been important to know, what actually had been the inducements held out to the free negro, to tempt him to labour for hire in the field; because, unless they have been of a kind equal if not superior to what were presented to him by other and easier employments, the fact that he has not been induced to labour in the field or hire proves nothing against his industry. Nay, it may be a proof of the very contrary. It may be a proof that such are his resources, and such his successful exertions, in other more profitable lines of employment, as to raise him above the necessity of submitting to the coarse and ill-paid drudgery of field labour for hire. Major Moody, who, from the coincidence of his opinions with those of the petitioners, is an

* See Anti-Slavery Reporters, Nos. 19 and 26, for further facts respecting manumission.

unexceptionable witness on this point, states that the wages of field labour in the Virgin Islands vary from about $6\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $13d.$ a day, according to the strength and capacity of the individual. What it may be in Demarara we know not, but the Protector of slaves in Berbice having fixed at a guilder, (equal to $17\frac{1}{2}d.$ sterling,) the hire of a slave for a day, when he works voluntarily for his master, we may regard this as the extent of the inducement which would be held out to the free negro, in that colony and Demarara, for his labour in the field, from morning to night, under a tropical sun. Surely it would not be very creditable to the good sense of the free negro, if he were to submit, on such terms, to the incessant drudgery of field labour, provided easier, and at the same time more gainful, employment was open to him. What should we say of the good sense of any man in England, who should prefer hedging and ditching at $1s.$ a day, to some lighter and pleasanter occupation which should yield him two or three shillings a day? The very supposition is absurd. Before, therefore, the Demarara Planters can urge it as a proof of the want of industry in a free negro that he refuses to labour in the field, for any hire which they may have offered to him, they ought to have shewn that he was not more profitably, as well as pleasantly, employed in some other way.

Moreover, when the planters of Demarara and Berbice state so triumphantly the fact, that, in these colonies, "the free negro cannot be induced to work in the field for hire," they ought to have told us of what materials the 5,500 persons are composed who form the whole of the enfranchised population of both the Colonies. They ought to have told us what proportion of them consists of the female concubines of white men, and what of the offspring of their illicit concubinage; how many of them also are mechanics capable of earning perhaps $5s.$ or $6s.$ a day; how many of them cultivate profitably their own allotments; and how many of them are raised, by their circumstances, or by their exertions in other ways, above the necessity of field labour. They ought also to have told us how many individuals there are among them, capable of field labour, who are reduced to the necessity of resorting to that lowest and most fatiguing and least profitable species of drudgery; and who do not earn more, in some easier and less irksome way, than they could do by labouring, during 10 or 12 hours a day, in a tropical sun, for $1s. 5\frac{1}{2}d.$ Let the enfranchised individuals be specified who, though capable of field labour, yet prefer a state of comparative destitution to working for hire; and then there will be at least some facts to investigate in support of the theory of the petitioners.

But though, among the enfranchised population of Demarara and Berbice, there may be none who will condescend to steady labour in the field, from morning to night, for a guilder a day, yet we have this proof that industry is not absolutely extinct among them; that while 68 white individuals, in the years 1821 to 1825, received relief as paupers, only 28 enfranchised persons received such relief during the same time; the whole white population in the two Colonies being about 3000, and the whole enfranchised population about 5500. The 28 enfranchised persons also, who received relief, were almost exclusively women and children, most probably the deserted and destitute concubines or children of the pauper whites.

But, supposing that in Demarara and Berbice, the pecuniary inducements to labour in the field for hire were much more tempting than they can be shewn to be, yet there are several circumstances attending agricultural labour in these Colonies, which could not fail to have had a powerful influence in deterring free persons from engaging in it. The labour of the field was conducted under the whip. And although, in associating himself to the human team so worked, the free negro might have stipulated for the integrity of his skin, yet to have taken his place among them at all would seem to imply that he had bound himself to perform the same tale of labour with them. Without such an understanding, a planter would hardly have admitted among his slaves so pernicious an example, as that of a fellow-labourer pausing on the hoe, or relieving his fatigue by a temporary cessation from his toil. Most unquestionably, the *steady* and continuous labour of the Demarara field slave is what no man would submit to, who was not either impelled by the whip in the field, or liable to be punished by its infliction in case of failing to complete his task. Neither health nor strength could long endure it without sinking; a fact abundantly proved by the waste of human life which is caused by sugar planting in that Colony. The decrease of the whole slave population in Demarara appears to amount to about 2 per cent. per annum. Of the mortality which creates this large decrease, a great proportion is said to take place on the sugar plantations; so that it would probably be found, that the decrease directly caused by field labour on these, was swelled to 4 or 5, or even to 10 per cent. per annum, while in other lines of employment there might even be an increase; which, nevertheless, left an average decrease on the whole to the enormous extent of about 2 per cent. per annum. Now, it is not pretended that any of these slaves are killed outright by the employment of sugar planting, or by the actual inflictions of the cart-whip;

but the truth is, that the exaction of labour being beyond their strength, they are killed off by degrees. They are worn down by the effort to which they are incessantly stimulated; and at length they give way under it. As their strength begins to sink, the excitement of the whip is more needed; and some time may elapse before the person who administers it can satisfy himself, whether the diminished exertion of the slave be the effect of want of power, or of want of will, until at length the breaking frame leaves no room for doubt. Such was the history of negro life and negro suffering in thousands and thousands of instances. And to such a state, who that was free would voluntarily have subjected himself? It would be like dooming himself to a lingering death—to death by a kind of mitigated torture. Who, indeed, would voluntarily expose himself to be the sharer, though on better terms, or even the constant spectator, of such a system; to be the witness of all the brutal violence, in language and conduct, on the part of drivers, overseers, managers, &c. which is of its very essence, as hitherto administered?

Reasons enough have now been given to shew, why the freed negroes of Demarara and the other Colonies should decline the inducements (if any were ever offered them, which we greatly doubt) to engage for hire in the labour of the field. But it by no means follows, that they may be therefore justly charged with want of industry. For what are the indications of industry which would be required of any class of men, in any part of the world? Would it not be that they were free from want, that they lived in comfort, and that they accumulated property? Now these tests of industry will be found to exist, generally, among the enfranchised population, not only of Demarara and Berbice, but of all the other West Indian Colonies.

That they are generally placed above want appears from this, that though their number amounts to about 90,000, yet of that number only 227 appear to have received even occasional relief, as paupers, during the years 1821 to 1825, and these chiefly the concubines or children of destitute whites: while, of about 65,000 whites, in the same time, 1675 received relief. The proportion, therefore, of enfranchised persons receiving any kind of aid, as paupers, in the West Indies, is one in nearly 400; whereas the proportion among the whites of the West Indies is about one in forty; and, in England generally, one in twelve or thirteen, in some counties one in eight or nine.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that the enfranchised population of the West Indies are subsisted by their own efforts; and it is no less certain, that they obtain their subsistence without the necessity of resorting

to the lowest and most degrading descriptions of employment. They are placed, in short, by their own unassisted exertions, above the necessity of engaging for hire in daily agricultural labour. In whatever degree they may employ themselves, and employ themselves profitably, in cultivation on their own account, they are not driven to engage for hire in those plantation labours in which the slaves are now exclusively occupied. This fact is not only admitted by the Demarara Planters, but it is made the very ground on which they impute to the free negro a total want of industry. But may it not possibly be a proof of the elevation consequent on freedom, and of the industry rather than the indolence of the enfranchised? They maintain themselves in independence, without submitting to the laborious, fatiguing, degrading, and deathful employment of the slave. And this is the charge against them! And not only do they subsist, but they subsist in comfort; and even accumulate wealth. And this they do, though pressed down by civil and political disabilities of the most discouraging kind; and, although the scope of their industry is narrowed, and its efforts are repressed, by cruel and invidious exclusions and distinctions. It even argues considerable energy and elasticity of character, that they should have at all surmounted the obstacles which have so sternly opposed their progress to comfort and wealth.

If any proof of this statement were wanting, it would be sufficient to cite the uncontradicted details, laid before Parliament, in the last Session, by Lord Harrowby, in the House of Lords, and by Dr. Lushington, in the House of Commons, respecting the state of the enfranchised population of JAMAICA, being nearly a moiety of that of the whole of the British West Indies. Not only was no attempt made to contradict those details, but their truth was admitted by Mr. Pallmer, himself a Jamaica Planter, and who had resided for a considerable time in that island. Uncontradicted admissions to the same effect might be cited from the discussions which have taken place, even in the Assembly of Jamaica, on the claims of the enfranchised inhabitants of that island to be relieved from their civil disabilities.

The Colony of TRINIDAD contains a still larger proportion of enfranchised persons than Jamaica. They outnumber by four to one the whites, and are outnumbered by the slaves in the proportion of only three to two. The whites are 3500, the slaves about 23,000, and the free blacks, and people of colour, upwards of 15,000, some say 17,000. And what is the condition of these last? There is not a single pauper among them, not a single individual receiving aid from public charity.

They live comfortably and independently, and nearly half of the property of the Island is said to be in their hands. There, it is admitted on all hands, that the enfranchised Africans and their descendants have long since emerged from barbarism, have become enlightened, have acquired wealth, are highly respectable in character, and are rapidly advancing in knowledge and refinement. Of these facts his Majesty's Government are fully apprized.

In ST. LUCIA, the enfranchised part of the population is three times the number of the whites, and more than one-fourth of the number of the slave population.* The Governor, General Mainwaring, distinctly states, that there is not a single pauper in this Colony. Mr. Jeremie, the Chief Justice of that Colony, thus expresses himself respecting them: "The emancipated negroes have been taxed with laziness; but scarcely is a road opened, in any part of the country, but the borders are occupied by free settlers." He also combats the objections urged against affording facilities to manumission; some of them the very same with those taken by the Demarara Planters. He argues strenuously for giving to slaves a right of property in land, that when enfranchised they may possess a domicile, and land of their own to till. Much of the imputation on the industry of the free negroes, and of their alleged aversion to agricultural labour, he conceives to arise either from their not being permitted to retain and pay rent for those provision grounds which they had cultivated with care as slaves, or from the great difficulty they experience, in consequence of the prejudice existing against their holding lands, in finding another spot and obtaining a sure title to it, where they may begin cultivation on their own account. The slaves, when manumitted, lose the land which had cost them so much trouble to cultivate. The masters, either from prejudice, or from some strange and unaccountable policy, instead of encouraging them to remain on the estate to which they might thus become attached, and where they would be ready to lend their assistance when wanted, it seems, expel them from it. If, however, they were permitted to continue to hold, when free, paying a small rent for it, the same spot of land they had previously improved, or were encouraged to have another prepared to which they could remove, the ground he conceives for this charge of indolence would be taken away. He thinks it quite unlikely, in that case, that persons so shrewd as slaves are, by habit abstemious and frugal, fond of hoarding their earnings, will become less solicitous

* Papers laid before Parliament in 1825, p. 233.

about money and wealth, when they can devote more time to amassing it, and when they hold it by a safer tenure.

In GRENADA, the enfranchised population is four times the number of the whites, nor is there one pauper among them.

In June 1823, a petition was presented by this class to the Assembly of Grenada affirming their loyalty and general good conduct, the largeness of their contributions to the revenue, and their importance to the defence and security of the Colony. They distinctly stated that they possessed no small portion of the property in the Colony, and that of the capital town in it two thirds actually belonged to them. This petition was submitted to a Committee of the Assembly, and on their report the Assembly resolved "that the free coloured inhabitants of these islands are a respectable, well-behaved, class of the community, and possessed of considerable property in the Colony;" and then followed some further resolutions in favour of their claims, which resolutions however do not appear to have been as yet acted upon.

Now it might, without doubt, be said of the enfranchised negroes of Grenada as of Demarara, that not a single individual among them had ever been known to employ himself in daily agricultural labour in the field for hire; but would it be a fair inference from this fact that their industry had been extinguished, or even impaired, by their manumission? On the contrary, what more satisfactory proof of industry could possibly have been exhibited than the fact that, slaves as they or their parents had recently been, they were now living in comfort and independence, "respectable," "well-behaved," and "possessed of considerable property?" No explanation can possibly be given of this result which does not involve both their capacity and willingness of exertion, and which does not prove that the enfranchised negroes of the West Indies are not wanting in industry. The only fact which is adduced in opposition to this conclusion is, that the free negroes do not work in the field of the plantations for hire; a fact which is admitted, but which is so far from proving a want of industry, that it does not even prove that they do not employ themselves industriously, extensively, and beneficially in agricultural pursuits on their own farms, or in other ways.

But another irresistible proof of the state of comfort in which the enfranchised population of the West Indies are placed, may be found in the rapid increase of their numbers by natural propagation. And this progressive increase is rendered the more remarkable by the circumstance of the progressive decrease of every other class of the commu-

nity, of the whites on the one hand, and of the slaves on the other. Even the Maroons of Jamaica increase rapidly while the slaves around them decrease.

In *BERBICE* itself the number of enfranchised persons had increased in the five years, 1821 to 1825, from 669 to 835, although in that time there had been only 49 manumissions.* Here we have an increase by births of 117 on 669 in five years, being at the astonishing rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum; while the slaves have been decreasing in *Berbice*, and still more in *Demarara*, in which last colony their decrease has been proceeding at the enormous rate of nearly 2 per cent. per annum.

5. Statements similar to this in effect might be multiplied. Every colony in the West Indies would supply materials. And yet in the face of such facts do the *Demarara* planters take it upon them to tell His Majesty in Council that enfranchisement instead of promoting industry, comfort, civilization and moral improvement, tends on the contrary to generate idleness, profligacy, barbarism and crime. This statement rests on no authority whatever, The point however is so important that we must beg leave, though at the risk of being tedious, to make a few farther observations on the subject.

Proofs that the enfranchised population are not wanting in industry have been already exhibited. Their reputation for *loyalty* at least is untainted. They have never been charged with conduct or with purposes adverse to the public safety. And as to crimes of another description, though it would be too much to expect that among so large a body, and especially a body so very unfavourably circumstanced with respect to the means of education and instruction, criminals should not be found, yet it is confidently believed that the proportion of enfranchised persons, convicted of crimes in the West Indies, is smaller than that of any other class, whether free or enslaved. And for the elucidation of this fact it may be sufficient to refer to the records of the West Indian judicatories generally. We have only found one actual return on this subject among the Parliamentary papers. It is from the Island of Jamaica. The enfranchised inhabitants of that island are considerably more numerous than the whites. And yet by a return from several of its parishes ordered to be printed by the House of Commons, on the 12th July 1815, (No. 478) it appears that the proportion of criminal convictions of whites, and of enfranchised persons, was as 24 of the former to 8 of the latter. We have been assured that the proportions would not be found materially different in the other colonies.

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 53, 9th May, 1826.

As to what respects *general civilization* also, it may be equally demonstrated, that under great and numerous disadvantages, disadvantages imposed upon them by the system of oppression and degradation to which they are forced to submit, they have not only not retrograded since their enfranchisement, but have considerably advanced. Of this the comfort in which they live, the increase of their numbers, their comparative freedom from crime, their peaceable demeanour as subjects, and their accumulation of property, furnish incontestable and conclusive evidence. But in addition to these, the progress of light and knowledge among them, and their thirst for the benefits of education, for themselves and their children, are quite decisive, and do not permit a single doubt to hang upon the question.

And if we contemplate, in this view, the disadvantages and obstacles with which they have had to contend, the credit due to them for having made any advance whatever in civilization is very considerably enhanced. They have been oppressed, degraded, discountenanced and trampled upon. They have been shut out from every office of trust or emolument; from every thing which might stimulate them to acquire knowledge or to cultivate their intellectual powers. They have had the very worst moral examples exhibited to them by the whole body of their superiors, who have been, in fact, the very instruments of poisoning the sources of moral improvement, by seducing their women into a participation of their worst vices, and by thus spreading the taint of profligacy, like a moral leprosy, over the whole face of society.* They have thus been not only habituated to the spectacle, and exposed to the contaminating example of the grossest immoralities from infancy, but their women have been taught to regard a participation in them as the only path to wealth and distinction; as a subject of glory instead of a subject of reproach or shame. They have been deprived of every incentive to honourable conduct, not only by being shut out from all places of trust and emolument, but by being denied every active right of citizenship whatever, having been, for the most part, excluded, until recently, even from giving evidence in Courts of Justice, in cases where whites were concerned. Besides this, until within the last two years, no measures were even begun to be taken by the local governments to furnish them with the means of education, or with moral and religious instruction of any kind. The cultivation of their minds, or of their manners, was not only utterly neglected but actually perverted. They have had no

* See Bryan Edwards, Stewart, Williamson, Bickell, Cooper, &c. &c.

communion with their superiors but that of vice; no control on the part of their rulers but what tended to sink them deeply in debasement.

And yet notwithstanding all this, they have been emerging from their original state of incivilization with a progress which has gone beyond all reasonable anticipations. We refer to the living mass for the proof of our position. Many of them will now bear an advantageous comparison, not only in respect to wealth, the fruit of industry, but in respect of their moral qualities, and even of their intellectual acquirements, with multitudes of the whites who condemn them as an inferior race, and who would deem themselves degraded by sitting down with them at the same table.

In confirmation of this view of the subject, besides appealing to the testimonies already adduced, and particularly to Bryan Edwards's *History of the West Indies*, we would refer to Mr. Coleridge, who, in his "Six Months' Tour," (a work which is very far from being, in general, a safe authority,) establishes, in an unequivocal manner, the respectability of the coloured classes; and, above all, to the Commissioners of legal inquiry who have, of late, visited the West Indies,—to Mr. Henry, Mr. Coneys, and Mr. Dwarris. This last mentioned gentleman is, himself, a West Indian, and the proprietor of an estate in Jamaica, and though he has risen superior to some of the prejudices of his fellow Colonists, he has, nevertheless, exhibited sufficient proof of the remaining influence of colonial feeling on his mind, to render him an invaluable witness in such a case as the present. A passage at the close of his third Report will amply confirm our general statements, respecting the growing improvement and civilization of the enfranchised classes, while it will give a striking view of the debasement to which the injustice and pride of the white class have reduced them, and which is rendered not the less striking by the very doubts and fears of Mr. Dwarris.

Mr. Dwarris thus expresses himself:

"The policy and justice of admitting the free people of colour (whose numbers are continually increasing,) to an extension of civil privileges, and, indeed, the title of some among them, to a participation in all political rights, is very clear to a dispassionate observer in this country. But so strong are the prejudices existing in the West Indies, founded chiefly on physical peculiarities of the African race, and so impossible is it to alter the habits and feelings of a people, by merely changing their laws, that, upon this subject, I am quite at a loss what to recommend."*

* It is, at least, unquestionable, that a law which should admit enfranchised persons duly qualified as to property to sit on juries, and to exercise the elective

“ That the *truly respectable, the well-educated, well-principled, and well-conducted, among the coloured inhabitants of these islands*, should be left precisely on the same footing, in respect of civil disabilities, with the newly-emancipated slave, is a condition of society, which, without any violent shock to ancient prepossessions, might, I venture to think, admit of some alleviation.*

“ There are islands, where, from the thinness of the white population, it is already felt to be desirable to admit free persons of colour upon coroner’s juries. There is, in other islands, a manifest indisposition in the white inhabitants to be frequently summoned at the sittings of the Courts; and, indeed, the only objection to the institution or revival of quarter sessions, in Colonies where it was felt to be greatly wanted for the trial of petty offences, was the inconvenience apprehended, by persons engaged in commercial or agricultural pursuits, from being so frequently called upon to attend as jurors. In these inferior Courts, in the first instance, free persons of colour possessing a certain qualification in property, and never having themselves been in the condition of Slavery,† might, it does appear to me, and I state it with submission, be not only unobjectionably, but with very great advantage, admitted to act as jurymen. In process of time,” and why not now? “ I further expect that the white inhabitants will gladly avail themselves of their assistance on all petty juries, reserving to themselves, as possessing the greatest property and consideration in the country,‡ the exclusive privilege of acting upon grand and special juries. For the rest, time, improved feelings in the one class, and continued good conduct in the other, will gradually produce a salutary influence, and be much more efficacious in the result, than any forced changes in favour of a particular class.§ As a matter of natural right, if it were insisted on, *these persons*

franchise might easily be enforced in the Courts of the King; and also that their rights of person and property might be adequately protected by independent judges, named by the Crown.

* There has, therefore, been, according to Mr. Dwaris, a great progression in civilization among the enfranchised class.

† Why should the having been a slave, if a man has, by his own good conduct, attained to freedom, and acquired the property qualifying him for the exercise of its rights, be made a bar to that exercise?

‡ Is this the fact? On the contrary, are not the whites in general mere adventurers, having no stake whatever in the country as compared with the enfranchised class?

§ That is true, as far as objections to matrimonial unions, association, &c. are concerned; these must be left to time; but not so as to the enjoyment of *rights*, and the infliction of *wrongs*:—the one ought to be secured, and the other to be prevented by laws, and that forthwith.

undoubtedly ought to compose half the jury when coloured people are on trial, or have their interests at stake; but were this measure suddenly attempted, I firmly believe, under existing feelings, that no white person would sit with them in the same jury-box. The terms in which their very friends in the Colonies advocate their cause, betray the deep-rooted feelings of repugnance and disgust which too certainly exist."

"In conclusion, I can only repeat my earnest recommendation to this *deserving class*, to continue the same *unimpeachable* demeanour, they have hitherto preserved; and my conviction, that they will, in such case, not only establish, incontestably, their fitness for the situations from which they are excluded, but, eventually, conciliate the esteem and confidence of their countrymen, whose prejudices they will have insensibly subdued."

That, however, they never will do, until the law shall have authoritatively spoken on the subject. The West Indian white feels now, and while the legislature shall continue to concede to his absurd and unreasonable prejudices, will continue to feel, the same kind of repulsion to seeing a man of colour placed on the same civil or political level with himself, which, in this country, makes persons of refined habits to shrink from the contact of squalidness and rags.

Now, even Mr. Dwarris, who, with all his liberality, retains some share of Creolian prejudice, does not scruple to assert that the "justice of admitting the free people of colour, whose numbers are continually increasing, to an extension of civil privileges; and indeed the title of some among them to a participation in all political rights," are unquestionable. And he thinks it need not give any very violent shock to ancient prejudices, "that the truly respectable, the well-educated, well-principled, and well-conducted among the coloured inhabitants,"—(for it seems there are such among them) should be released from their present disabilities. He proposes, therefore, that certain classes of the enfranchised should be admitted gradually to certain privileges, but under rather absurd restrictions and limitations. With these remnants of West Indian feeling we have nothing to do at present. Our object is to record the decisive testimony of Mr. Dwarris, not to the alleged progressive decline in civilization of the enfranchised classes, but to their progressive advance in civilization. Nay, of those who have been the longest emancipated, he is so far from stating them to have retrograded, that he says of them, that they are "a deserving class," who have preserved "an unimpeachable demeanour," and who he has no doubt, if tried, "will establish incontestably their fitness for the situa-

tions from which they were now excluded." After all these statements, is it possible to maintain that there is a shadow of ground for the assertion of the Demarara Petitioners, that enfranchised slaves, instead of becoming useful members of the community, would become "a burden to the public, and depraved and unhappy in themselves?"

Upon the whole, it cannot be denied that the enfranchised population of the West Indies rank infinitely higher than the enslaved population, in respectability, in wealth, in intelligence, and in all that goes to constitute the real prosperity of a community. Nor can it be questioned, that if the enslaved population were all elevated, by the same or similar means, to the condition to which the enfranchised population have attained, a great accession of individual happiness and of colonial prosperity would be the inevitable result.

It was well and ably remarked by Lord Chief Justice Best, in a recent address to the Grand Jury of Wiltshire, that a country can then only be said to be prosperous, not when there are a few rich men and the rest are in a state of dependence, but when the mass of the people are in the enjoyment of easy and comfortable circumstances. And this is most obviously the point to which the measure of giving facilities to enfranchisement tends to bring the state of society in the West Indies.

In reply therefore to the allegations of the Petitioners, we affirm, and we think we have proved by the most undeniable testimony, that the manumitted population of the West India Islands, instead of being idle and disorderly, are an industrious and orderly class; that, instead of being contented with a bare subsistence, they vie in the acquisition of comforts and luxuries with the Whites; that, instead of retrograding in wealth, their property has been rapidly accumulating, while that of the Whites, they themselves being witnesses, has been deteriorating; and that, instead of sinking in the scale of civilization, they have been fast advancing in moral and intellectual improvement. If, therefore, they have preferred other occupations to the tilling of the soil, for such hire as has been offered to them, (if indeed any offer of the kind has been made them) it must be because the occupations they have preferred have afforded them a higher profit. And it is surely more rational to refer their choice to this cause, a cause both adequate and undeniable, than to a want of industry, the existence of which is disproved by such a multitude of circumstances as have been here detailed.

6. A farther ground of objection to the policy of facilitating manumission, has been drawn from *the agricultural code which was*

promulgated in Hayti in the course of the last year. On this code the learned Counsel Mr. Adam, dwelt at considerable length as proving, beyond dispute, all for which his clients contended, as to the incurable indolence of the enfranchised negro, and the impossibility of obtaining from him any productive labour without severe coercion.

In order to sustain, in the slightest degree, this view of the Haytian Code, those who have adopted it, have been under the necessity of resorting to a mistranslation of one of the terms which occur in it; and on this mistranslation, in point of fact, does their whole argument rest. They have laboured, for obvious reasons, to discover if possible the existence of the driving system in that code, and in order to this they have adopted the clumsy expedient of rendering the French word "Conducteur," into the English word "Driver;" whereas all who know any thing of the French language, know that the term for what we call a "Driver" is not "Conducteur," but "Commandeur;" the word "Conducteur" as applied to *men* answering to the English term "Foreman."

A mere term, after all, proves nothing. In the English Islands, the "Driver" has various essential attributes of which the "Conducteur" in Hayti is wholly divested. This last has in the first place no driving instrument; he is without his cart-whip, that execrable engine of exaction and oppression, that "base, cruel, debasing instrument of torture," to use the energetic expressions of Mr. Barret, a planter of Jamaica, in a speech made last year in the Assembly of that island, "the fellow of the rack and the thumb screw"—for the abolition of which "every heart that is not callous pants," the lacerations of which, he tells us are inflicted "at the pleasure of an individual, at his sole command, as caprice or passion dictates" sometimes by whites of the lowest order; sometimes by one slave (the Driver) "*at his discretion* on another slave."

Nor let it be supposed that the absence or presence of the cart-whip constitutes a trivial difference. It is most vital. For what has been the main cause why negro life has been wasting, and still is wasting, with a fearful rapidity, in our slave colonies? It has been the presence of the cart-whip, in the hands of the driver.—And what has been the main cause that, in the last twenty-two years, while the British slave population has been mouldering away, the negro population of Hayti has more than doubled its numbers? It has been the absence of that torturing impulse. This single fact may satisfy us,

and will satisfy every statesman as well as philanthropist, of the infinite distance there is between our West India system, and the system prevailing in Hayti;—that the population of Hayti is rapidly increasing, while that of our slave and sugar colonies continues, from year to year, and from day to day, to diminish.

The Learned Counsel dwelt on the extreme severity of the Haytian Code; and yet all its severities put together do not equal the cruelty, barbarity, and reckless despotism of a single clause (the 37th) in the very latest specimen of Colonial Reform, given us by the Legislature of Jamaica, in their meliorating Act of December 1826; a clause too, which, as if in mockery of the wretched slave, professes to be framed “in order to restrain his arbitrary punishment.” These are its terms.

“AND IN ORDER TO RESTRAIN ARBITRARY PUNISHMENTS, be it further enacted, that no slave, on any plantation or settlement, or in any of the workhouses or gaols in this island, shall receive ANY MORE than TEN LASHES at one time and for one offence, unless the owner, attorney, guardian, executor, administrator, or overseer, of such plantation or settlement, having such slave in his care, or keeper of such workhouse, or keeper of such gaol shall be present; and that no such owner, attorney, guardian, executor, administrator, or overseer, workhouse-keeper, or gaol-keeper, shall, on any account, punish a slave with more than THIRTY-NINE LASHES at one time and for one offence, nor inflict, nor suffer to be inflicted, such last-mentioned punishment, nor any other number of lashes on the same day, nor until the delinquent has recovered from the effect of any former punishment, under a penalty not less than ten pounds, nor more than twenty pounds, for every offence,” &c.—Such is the law passed, by the enlightened Legislature of Jamaica, in December, 1826, and which is applicable to every slave, man, woman, or child in that island. By that law the *driver* may inflict ten lashes;—and the owner and overseer, nay, the gaol-keeper and workhouse-keeper, the attorney, guardian, and administrator may, each and every one of them, inflict thirty-nine lashes on the bare posteriors of any and every slave, man, woman, or child in the island, without a trial, without the order of a magistrate, for no defined offence, but merely because he (the owner, &c.) is offended; nor can he, *by any law*, be called to answer for such conduct. Nay, the clause is framed for the express purpose of protecting him against all responsibility for so doing.

Now, what are the severities of the Haytian Code, which can for one

moment be compared to this savage enactment? Its worst severities are directed against idleness and vagrancy; against those who have no visible means of subsistence; and even these worst severities are but a mitigated imitation of the English law on the same subject. We refer in proof of this to the Code itself, which is inserted entire in the 23d No. of the Anti-Slavery Reporter, in which will also be found the corresponding regulations, as given by Judge Blackstone, of that English law, which, the learned commentator tells us, "abhors and will not endure the existence of Slavery within this nation." The regulations will be found in his first book, p. 424 to 427 of the 11th edition. The following brief extracts from it will suffice for the present purpose.

"All single men between twelve years old and sixty, and married ones under thirty years of age, and all single women between twelve and forty, not having any visible livelihood, are compellable, by two Justices, to go out to service in HUSBANDRY, or certain specific trades, for the promotion of honest industry; and no master can put away his servant, or servant leave his master, after being so retained, either before or at the end of his term, without a quarter's warning, unless upon reasonable cause, to be allowed by a Justice of the Peace; but they may part by consent, or make a special bargain." Again: "A third species of servants are *labourers*, who are only hired by the day or the week, and do not live *intra mœnia*, as part of the family; concerning whom the statutes before cited, (5 Eliz. c. 4. and 6 Geo. III. c. 26,) have made many VERY GOOD regulations: 1, *Directing that all persons who have no visible effects may be COMPELLED to work*: 2, *Defining HOW LONG they must continue at work in summer and in winter*: 3, *Punishing such as leave or desert their work*: 4, *Empowering the Justices at Sessions, or the Sheriff of the county to settle their wages*: and, 5, *Inflicting penalties on such as either give or exact more wages than are so settled.*"

It cannot be shewn that there is a single regulation in the Haytian Code more severe than this. Above all, there is not to be found in it a licence for any arbitrary punishment whatever, by either proprietor, manager, overseer, or "conducteur." The law, and the law alone, fixes both crime and punishment; and the penalties in no case consist of the flagellation either of men or women. That coarse, revolting, and demoralizing species of arbitrary infliction, which universally pervades our Slave Colonies, and to which they all cling with extraordinary tenacity, even in the case of the delicate female frame, is in Hayti wholly unknown. The provisions of the Haytian Code also extend

alike to the master and to the labourer, both being alike the objects of its protecting and its restraining power; nor is a particle of discretion as to punishment conceded to the master, beyond what is enjoyed by his meanest labourer. Indeed, the rights and comforts of this last class seem to have been watched over with peculiar care. The Haytian, even if reduced to the necessity of agricultural labour, may choose his employment and his employer. He may engage for a shorter or a longer time, as suits his convenience. He may contract to receive a fourth part, or a half, of all the produce he raises; and in the first of these cases, which is the most frequent, he is not only lodged, but fed, on the plantation, from the produce of his own labour, not during his own time, but during five days in the week which alone he has contracted to give to his employer. Observe the force of the regulation on this point, Art. 36. “On every rural establishment they” (*viz.* the proprietors or renters) “shall be bound to cultivate *provisions, &c. sufficient for the sustenance of the persons employed there.*” This is to be the first care. (Article 19.) The labourer for a fourth is also to be furnished, gratuitously, with all his tools, (Article 62.) and with medical attendance and medicine, (Article 67.) and has the benefit, without any diminution of his share of the produce, of all the cattle and machinery on the estate, and of the expense of its management, (Articles 51, 65, and 66.) And, possessing all these advantages, he receives, besides, his fair share of the fourth part of the gross produce raised by him and his fellow labourers, (Article 52.) The proprietor is further bound to furnish the labourer with land for his own use, to be cultivated by himself, and for himself, during his frequently recurring holidays, his Sundays, and his regular day in the week of rest from plantation labour, (Art. 38, 39.) On five days of the week he works for his employer and himself in common: he has his full subsistence from the labour of these days, besides his share of all marketable produce grown on the plantation. And he has, moreover, land, and abundant time in the week for its cultivation, whereby to increase his comforts or to add to his capital. Such also is the consideration which the law bestows on the formation and promotion of industrious habits, by their only effectual spring, a sense of self-interest, that even the infirm, and the children of early age, while fed by the provisions of the plantation, are encouraged to exertion, by shares of all the other produce of it, proportioned to the efforts, however feeble, which they are able to make. And even the women who have contracted to labour, for a term of years, in return for their provisions and their share of the other produce, are not de-

prived of the benefit of this contract, by the incapacities of a pregnant state, but, though relieved on that account, for a time, from their share of the labour, are still allowed to share in the proceeds of that labour.

Every Haytian parent, too, though himself attached to agriculture, has it in his power to send his children to town to be educated, or to be taught a profession or trade, on his simple request to a Justice of the Peace (Art. 5.); a regulation which of itself seems to secure the moral and intellectual progress of this people.

But the grand security of Haytian freedom and happiness is to be found in the absence of all those invidious distinctions, arising from the colour of the skin as being the livery of slavery, which proves the curse of the African and his descendants in our slave colonies. In the Haytian Courts of Justice, the evidence of no man or woman whatever is precluded. There, all, of all ranks, stand on an equal footing; and this circumstance, when superadded to the absence of the cartwhip, and to the substitution, for its stimulus, of self-interest as the spring of effort, makes a difference in the two states of being so large as scarcely to admit of calculation or comparison.

The public has been amused of late with theories respecting the effect of the smell, colour, hair, features and other peculiarities of the negro race, in preventing them from rising in the scale of civilized society. To Hayti these theories can have no application. The peculiarities to which such powerful effects have been assigned, are there the common inheritance of high and low, rich and poor. The governors and the governed, the framers of the laws and the meanest subjects of them, are of the same flesh and blood, and smell and colour. That corporeal degradation and intellectual debasement, which mark the condition of the negro slave, are not, in Hayti, as in our colonies, the adjunct either of a black skin or a negro descent. The chain which, in the latter, binds the negro to the earth, in the former is broken; and the lowest Haytian has the same prospect of seeing his son rise to distinction in his native island, as the meanest British parent has of seeing his descendant attain to eminence in the various walks of life in this great and civilized empire.

Mr. Adam indeed strongly objected to the Haytian system as servile and despotic, because the police of the plantations was chiefly administered by the military authorities. The truth is, however, that the situation of the Island requiring a military force for the preservation of its independence, and the ablest and most intelligent persons in the island being enrolled in the army, such an arrangement was recommended both

by its economy, the same machinery serving a double purpose; and by its expediency, the responsibility of military men, and their habits of regularity being such as to afford a better security, than in present circumstances could otherwise be obtained, against either neglect of duty or abuse of power. But whatever be the evils of that arrangement, they affect equally the proprietor and the peasant, who are both alike subject to the inspection of these responsible superintendants. And there is this undeniable proof of its working well—that while the negro population of our colonies has in the same period been rapidly diminishing, the negro population of Hayti has, since 1804, more than doubled its numbers.

7. The Memorialists further object that *the proposed measure will produce complete and speedy ruin to the Colonies.*

This is obviously the language of passion and exaggeration and not of reason. Is it not a sufficient reply to such an argument to refer to the experience of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, where still greater facilities, than those now objected to, have long been given to manumission, and on terms also far more favourable to the slave and less advantageous to the master? What proof of ruin do those colonies exhibit? Nay what proof of ruin does Trinidad exhibit, as compared with any other of our slave colonies, although manumissions, in the very mode now proposed, have been multiplying there, until the number of the enfranchised is approaching to that of the enslaved population?

The apprehended ruin is to arise, we presume, from the diminution of the number of labourers on an estate, caused by the increase of manumissions. A diminution however of these labourers has long been taking place in Demarara, attended with far less advantageous circumstances, but of which the Memorialists have made no complaint as tending to their ruin;—we mean the diminution of the slave population by mortality; a diminution too, for which, unlike that occasioned by manumission, no indemnity can be claimed.

Let us suppose that, during the six years from 1818 to 1824, manumissions had taken place in Demarara, under the operation of some such law as is now objected to, to the amount of 8,574 slaves; for whose redemption an average price of £90 sterling (being about the average price of the Marshal's sales) had been paid, making a sum, on the whole, of £771,660. In this case, the capital of the Demarara planters might be somewhat changed in its nature, but it would not be diminished in its amount. The owners of the emancipated slaves, if they could not replace them from the numerous sales of the Marshal which take place in that colony, or from other sources, would still have the value of the

emancipated slaves as a source of income. Even if slaves were so scarce that none were to be procured but at a high price, this would be no disadvantage to him who received, for his enfranchised slave, the full market value whatever that might be.

The fact, however, differs very widely from the supposition here made. The slave population indeed has not been diminished to the extent supposed, by *manumission*, during the years 1818 to 1824—but, during those years, it has been diminished to that extent, to the extent that is to say of 8,574 individuals, by the excess of deaths over births.* And this excess of mortality therefore has actually occasioned a loss to the Demarara planters of about £771,660, for which they can obviously claim no indemnity whatever. It is somewhat strange then that these gentlemen should complain so vehemently of what they call the *compulsory* manumissions of the British government, though it provides a full indemnity for each; and yet should make no complaint of the far more extensive manumissions, also *compulsory*, effected by that unceremonious and irresistible emancipator, *Death*; who however gives himself no trouble in appraising the value of those whom he enfranchises, or in compensating the owner for his loss.

Now let us only suppose another possible case; (one indeed we grieve to say, which is wholly contrary to the fact;) that the mild administration of Slavery, of which the Demarara planters boast so loudly, had spared that waste of life which the six years in question have witnessed; but that the numbers of their slaves had still been diminished to the same extent, though not by *death*, yet by *manumission*; would they in that case have had any cause to complain of ruin? They would have been richer by £771,660 than they now are; while humanity would have had more in which to rejoice, and less over which to mourn.

The apprehensions of ruin, from the measures in question, may still be *professed* by the planters of Demarara and Berbice, but surely they cannot be seriously entertained by any rational being.

8. The Memorialists express their fear lest the proposed measure should “*endanger the lives of the white inhabitants of Demarara and Berbice.*”

What but the blindness and unreasonableness of prejudice can account for such a groundless fear? What instance can be adduced of danger to the public peace from the most liberal extension of the right of redemption to slaves? What danger has ever followed the

* See Anti-Slavery Reporters, Nos. 19 and 26, and the Parliamentary documents there referred to.

very measure so strongly deprecated? It has always been the law of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, and yet the internal peace of those colonies has been more stable than that of any others; nay to this very law have they been indebted for their security. Experience therefore is decidedly opposed to this objection. Even in Trinidad, although the enfranchised part of the community have had much to complain of in the conduct of the whites; and though in number they exceed the whites in the proportion of five to one, yet in 1816, and afterwards in 1823, while every other colony in the West Indies was agitated by alarms, in Trinidad they enjoyed a state of perfect tranquillity. The colonies which experienced any real agitation, were the very two colonies where hindrances to manumission had been multiplied with the most jealous care, Barbadoes and Demarara.

In Barbadoes, the tax on manumissions had been raised to 200*l.* on men, and 300*l.* on women. In Demarara, not only were heavy imposts arbitrarily imposed on each act of manumission as it occurred, by the Governor and Court of Policy, but without *their* formal licence, no slave could be manumitted at all. An owner was actually deprived of the power of giving freedom to his slave, without the consent of the Court of Policy, lest he should thereby endanger the public peace. In this single opprobrious fact we see the proof and also the cause of the absurd prejudice, and of the idle and unfounded alarms, which prevail in Demarara respecting manumission. The law has strengthened the prejudice, and the prejudice has increased the alarm.—The Demarara law is remarkable. It enacts, that “As the power of granting manumissions to slaves, is solely vested in the Governor and Court of Policy, all acts and deeds of whatsoever nature, executed by unauthorized individuals, and pretending to convey the right of freedom to slaves, are illegal, and the same are hereby declared to be null and void, and of no effect whatever; and any person who shall presume to infringe this sole and undoubted power, by granting or executing a release from servitude to any slave, &c., shall be subjected to a fine of 1000 guilders.”

Can any thing be conceived more monstrous than such a law? And it is the members of the very Court that framed it, who pretend to instruct the King's Privy Council, and the Ministers of the Crown, in sound views of policy. We may dismiss this futile objection without any further observation. It is wholly unsupported by facts; it is contrary to all experience; and it is clearly and decidedly opposed to every sound principle of general policy.

9. Still more unfounded, if possible, are the anticipations of *moral evil* which the Demarara Planters deduce from the increased facility of enfranchisement. The moral benefits of Slavery, and the moral evils of freedom, are topics reserved for the Planters of Demarara and Berbice, and for the new school of moral and political philosophy which some of their friends have laboured so assiduously to establish for their advantage.* Their newborn solitudes for the interests of morality, are, however, somewhat suspicious, especially when we call to mind the entire absence, for so many years, of all attempts on their part to improve the moral condition of their slaves; their marked dislike of religious instruction; their utter neglect of the institution of marriage; and the universal concubinage of all classes which has been substituted for it.

The Demarara Planters not only profess to think that Slavery is more favourable to the improvement of the moral character than freedom; (their avowed plan being to keep their slaves, slaves still, for the very purpose of improving their moral character, and thus fitting them for freedom) but they seem to hold that even the hope of obtaining freedom, though by a long course of industry and frugality, is pregnant with moral mischiefs. To state the proposition would be to refute it, even if our whole experience of the effect of enfranchisement, not only in the West Indies, but in all parts of the world, did not force upon us an opposite conclusion. It may be affirmed that there is no instance, in history, of a body of slaves, remaining in slavery, being raised in morals and civilization to a level with freemen. The change has either been effected, as in England, by giving ready facilities to individual manumission; or as in Hayti, by a revolutionary convulsion; or as in Lithuania, by a decree of the State, at once conferring freedom on the whole body of the slaves.

The Memorialists profess to have at heart the objects of civilizing the slave, and of improving his mind and morals, as introductory to emancipation. This sounds well, but it is a mere delusion. The objects they thus propose to effect we believe to be utterly unattainable, except by some general legislative measure of emancipation, or by some plan, like what they now so vehemently resist, which places a slave's enfranchisement within the reach of his own exertions.

10. The zeal of the Memorialists, in the cause of morality, is further evinced by their objecting to the slave's right of redemption, on account

* See the writings of Major Moody and Mr. M'Donnel, some articles in the Quarterly Review, &c. &c.

of its tendency to encourage the prostitution of the enslaved females to white men. Unfortunately, however, for this argument, the prostitution of female slaves already exists to the full demand of the white population. And, as for the "check to illicit connexion, which" it is most untruly asserted, "at present subsists, in the dread of bringing into existence an offspring whose lot is Slavery," we do not believe that such a consideration has had the very slightest effect, as a "check," on the licentiousness of the whites; licentiousness being, with very rare exceptions, universal among them. And if it really possessed any force, it must operate in a still greater degree against marriage with slaves.

The Court of Policy must have felt the extreme ridiculousness of such an argument as this, and they must have relied for its effect on the utter ignorance prevailing in the Privy Council of the real state of West Indian society. Could they have named a single individual on whom this alleged check had operated?

11. The Memorialists further object to the proposed plan, as *tending to diminish the number of voluntary and gratuitous manumissions*. Such manumissions, however, proceed, for the most part from considerations which are not likely to be permanently affected by the slave's possessing a right of self-redemption. A keeper will still be equally desirous, as he now is, of enfranchising his concubine, or a father his child, or a master a faithful and attached servant, if neither the concubine, the child, or the servant, should have the *power* as well as the *right* of self-redemption. If the proposed plan, indeed, by bringing additional purchasers into the market, should raise the market value of a slave, it will, of course, add to the master's reluctance to part with him. But voluntary manumissions, if they proceed to the same extent with redemptions by the slave himself, must equally affect the value of slaves generally, and tend equally in this way to abate the rapidity of manumissions. With their usual inconclusiveness of reasoning, however, the Memorialists seem to imagine, that though the system of self-redemption will liberate a smaller number of slaves than the system of voluntary manumission, yet that it will produce a greater effect in enhancing their market value!

12. The plan of self-redemption, we are further told, *offers a premium to idleness, and must produce discontent; for it affixes a higher price to the industrious than to the idle and profligate*.

It offers, however, a far higher premium to industry and frugality, than it does to idleness and waste. The industrious and well-behaved may indeed expect to pay a high price for their

freedom; but the idle and dissolute must know that they have no chance of obtaining it at all. An industrious slave will sooner raise 120*l.* for his redemption, than an idle slave will raise 20*l.* Undoubtedly it is a hardship on any man that he should have to pay for his good conduct, and some consideration ought to be given by Government to this subject. Still the most deserving slaves will, under the operation of the proposed plan, be much better off than heretofore, and therefore can hardly be discontented with so favourable a change in their lot. The objections, on this account, to the measure, fade into nothing, when that is compared with the existing system, and with its stern exclusion of the slave from all hope of freedom by his own exertions.

13. The proposed plan we are further told, would be *an encouragement to theft on the part of the slave, in order to acquire the means of effecting his enfranchisement.*

This, however, has not been found to be the case in the colonies where the largest facilities have been given to manumission; as in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, and in Trinidad. If facts of this kind could have been produced, they would not have been kept back: our ears would have been stunned with them. Besides, is there no police in the West Indies? Do thefts meet with impunity there? And if they do not, is it to be apprehended that those negroes, who seriously set themselves to obtain their freedom, will risk all their past progress, and all their future hopes, by the commission of felony? Such are not in general the men who commit felonies.

14. *The slave, it is also argued, will be obliged to deny himself comforts in order to accumulate his price. He will thus have acquired habits of parsimony, but not habits of enjoyment, and to these last alone can we trust for correcting his natural indolence.*

In opposition to this dogma of the new "philosophy of labour," we maintain that habits of industry, frugality, and providence, are far more to be trusted for correcting the slave's disposition to indolence, and for raising him in the scale of civilization, than habits of enjoyment, as they are called, which are in fact habits of prodigality. The real prosperity of the individual, as well as of the state, can only arise from accumulation, which is also the true path, politically speaking, to solid enjoyment, in the case of black as well as white.

15. A further objection to the proposed plan, is, that *the young and able, and especially young females, will be redeemed, while the old and infirm will be left.*

If, however, the compensation is adequate, this can be no injury to the planter, who will be able to purchase other young persons with the money. The market price must always accurately measure the real loss to the planter. It cannot be alleged that slaves are not to be bought in Demarara. During the five years from 1821 to 1825, there were sold in that colony, by the marshal alone, 2,705 slaves. The man who had received the full and fair value of a slave, would surely have no difficulty in replacing him, if he went to a sale with the money which he had just received for him in his hand.

16. *The security of the mortgagee, it is further asserted, will be lessened, if not destroyed by this plan.*

This plan, however, neither lessens nor destroys the security of the mortgagee. It only substitutes one security, and that a more stable one, for another. It tends indeed to increase, instead of to lessen, the value of the security arising from property in slaves; because it admits into the market fresh parties as purchasers, which must inevitably raise the market price of slaves, and therefore be in favour of the security.

17. *The plan is dangerous by the excitement it will produce among the slaves.*

This objection has been already answered under a former head. But are there no other dangers to be apprehended than those which proceed from a hope in the slaves of being able to redeem themselves? Is there then no danger in shutting out all such hope?

18. *The proposed plan is likewise objected to as discouraging taskwork.*

If however the use of the whip in the field be effectually and practically abolished, as the Memorialists take credit to themselves for having done, it is so obviously their interest to adopt taskwork, that no fears need be entertained on that point. Accordingly, Sir Ralph Woodford tells us that, in Trinidad, since the abolition of the driving whip, "Taskwork is becoming general."—Besides, if the compensation awarded to the master, in the appraised value of his slave, be, as has been shewn, an adequate compensation, why should the master discourage taskwork, especially if that method affords to the slave, as is asserted, the means of sooner accumulating his price? In that case we can conceive no motive but pure spite against freedom which should lead to such a result.

Our fear with respect to taskwork is of a very different description from that expressed by the Memorialists; it is the imminent danger that the tasks will be excessive. Let it be remembered that the master is con-

stituted the sole judge of the quantum of labour to be required from the slave, under the penalty of such corporal punishment as the master may inflict. Let it be remembered also that there is not, in the West Indies as in the United States, an obvious and easy method of checking the tendency in the master to undue exaction. Multitudes of the agricultural labourers in the United States are white. It would be too gross and palpable a violation of justice, to be often attempted, that tasks should be imposed on the black man, which the white man of equal strength, labouring on the same or an adjoining plantation, was unable to execute. This circumstance it is which in America has made taskwork such a benefit to the slave, that, notwithstanding his slavery, he multiplies his numbers rapidly. If we could discover any such natural check to undue exaction in the West Indies, we should entertain fewer apprehensions of the abuse of taskwork to purposes of oppression ; but in the existing state of things there, it is impossible to contemplate the subject without earnestly hoping that the government would turn its anxious attention to the means of guarding against the evils which may arise from that system, recommended as it undoubtedly is by many considerations, but yet liable as it also is to the most serious abuses.

19. Lastly, the proposed plan is objected to because, *by the emancipation of the slaves, the West India colonies will cease to be of any value to Great Britain.*

At present it must be admitted that the value of these colonies, as to what respects the slaves belonging to them, is now constantly deteriorating, and tends gradually to annihilation. Their rapid decrease by *death*, cannot be made the subject of indemnity. But supposing them to decrease, however rapidly, by *manumission*, their value will in that case be refunded to the master, and to the empire, by the hand of the slaves themselves ; who, by the very process, will also have become an increasing population of active and industrious freemen, each of them of far greater value, in a national point of view, than when he remained in bondage. Can any one doubt for a single moment, that, whether as the creators of wealth, or as the consumers of merchandize, the 35,000 enfranchised individuals of Jamaica, and the 15,000 of Trinidad, are not at this moment of more importance to the mother country, (and if the disabilities under which they labour were removed, would not become infinitely more important still) than twice or thrice the number of miserable slaves ? What country in the world has ever lost ground by the exchange of slavery for freedom, especially when brought about by the tranquil operation of legal facilities afforded to its acquisition ?

We have now gone through the whole of the objections made by the Planters of Demarara and Berbice to the general policy of the proposed plan for facilitating manumission. We have done this in order to expose their fallacy, although we might have fairly declined to enter upon the subject at all. The *policy* of the measure is no longer a point *sub judice*, having been already decided upon not only by His Majesty's Government, but by the unanimous voice of Parliament, who have stamped with their entire approbation those very principles of policy to which the Memorialists so strenuously object. Indeed without adhering to this course of policy, as Lord Bathurst, himself has justly remarked, "no system of measures would satisfy the feelings of the country, or execute the purposes of Parliament." To recede from it also would be to violate every pledge which has been given to the country both by the Crown and by the legislature, who have solemnly announced it as their determination that the slave shall have the right of redeeming himself or his family; and that the master shall be bound to receive, in lieu of the persons so redeemed, their fairly appraised value. The planters of Demarara and Berbice, however, deny that the appraised value of the slave is an adequate indemnity to the master; and this denial raises the only question which, in fact, is now really open for discussion. The question of policy has been already decided, and there can be no hope of changing that decision.*

II. We come now therefore to the second main point which, at setting out, (see p. 13) we proposed to consider, namely, *the alleged insufficiency of the indemnity proposed to be given to the Master for the manumission of his slave*. And this which is in truth, the only point really at issue, need not occupy us long, for it lies in a narrow compass.

The Memorialists allege that the market value of the slave will not indemnify the master for the loss of that slave's labour; and they fortify this view of the subject by referring to a statement of Lord Bathurst in an *Instruction* to the Governor of Demarara, in which after intimating that he considers the master entitled to have the loss he may sustain by the act of manumission fairly estimated with a view to his adequate compensation, he adds, "But if in the process of time it should unfortunately be found that the slaves, thus manumitted, altogether abandon

* We say nothing at present, though much might be said, on the impolicy of trifling with the hopes and fears of the slaves, and of the danger to the masters of arraying themselves against the universal wish of the nation, as well as against the excited expectations of the slave population. Such conduct seems like absolute infatuation.

their owners, and refuse to work as free persons, the owner not having the means to supply the loss of his slaves, and not being able to engage any free labourers for his *sugar plantations*, the price, which must then be assigned to the loss of each slave, must have a direct reference to that state in which the plantation will be placed by the progressive reduction of the means of conducting it."

It might have been easily foreseen that a statement so vaguely and obscurely expressed, on a subject also which so very deeply affected the prejudices and feelings of the West India planters, would have been liable to misconstruction. On that account its appearance in such a form is greatly to be deplored.

At the same time, it must be admitted, that Lord Bathurst has been very unfairly dealt with by the West Indians. They have represented him as maintaining that the value of the slave is not to be estimated by the market price, but by a calculation both of the present and prospective gain which the master may make of him. If this indeed were his Lordship's meaning, nothing could have been said in his defence, as such a mode of valuation would be both impracticable in itself, and unfair and iniquitous towards the slaves. The market price can be the only sure criterion of the value of the slave, and must always measure with sufficient accuracy the average gains of the master. And this, it now appears, was the precise and deliberate view of the case taken by his Lordship. For the construction to which we have adverted having been recently reduced to practice in Trinidad, in a case to which we shall presently refer, his Lordship, in a letter to Sir Ralph Woodford, dated Oct. 30, 1826, has explained his real meaning, which the parties, he says, proceeding "on an entire misapprehension and misapplication of the instruction by which they profess to have been guided, had wholly misconstrued." That instruction, he states, was not at all intended to affect present existing valuations, but to refer to a state wholly future, prospective and contingent, and which, even in that remote and, at most, possible event, was applicable to no slaves but those engaged in "the field labour of *sugar plantations*." "Generally speaking," his Lordship adds, "*the market price of slaves is the fairest criterion of their value, and it is that by which appraisers should principally regulate their valuations.*"* The various considerations mentioned in my dis-

* It is not obvious on what ground it is that his Lordship introduces the qualifying phrases, "generally" "principally." We can perceive no adequate reasons for such qualifications.

patch were not brought forward to supersede this criterion, but as those which *might progressively* affect the market price, and thereby make the fixing *now* a uniform price objectionable. By the term market price, it is not intended to refer to special sales which may have taken place under special circumstances, but to *that price for which a slave bona fide equivalent could be purchased at the time of the appraisement*, and in that case, whether the proprietor receives an actual substitution of an equivalent slave, or a sum of money, for which, at his option, an equivalent slave can be equally procured, his interests are equally preserved. Even on the supposition that no equivalent slave could be procured, the principle of appraisement would in no degree be changed. The price of the manumission in that case would be a sum which would be either an equivalent for the increased expense which the Proprietor would incur from employing a free person, in services in which it is known by experience that free people can be employed; or as a compensation, whatever may be the loss of the slave's labour in those services for which it may be found that free labour will not be available; or in those for which free labour may be only partially or inadequately substituted."*

Little need be added with a view of supporting this unanswerable reasoning of his Lordship. Conceding, for the sake of the argument, the Planter's right to complete indemnity, we would remark, that it is perfectly obvious, that if free labour could be obtained at the same expense and with the same profit as slave labour, no compensation whatever would be due to the Planter for the liberation of his slaves. If, on the contrary, free labour were not obtainable at all, an equitable compensation would include the value of such property as would be made valueless by his emancipation. Between these extremes there is a variety of gradations, for which it would be difficult previously to provide. But the market price of the slave, and that alone, solves the difficulty. And if, in the progress of emancipation, the Planters find it impossible to obtain free labour at all, the market price of the slaves must rise, so as to cover even the value of the estate, so far as that may be unaffected by other extrinsic circumstances. But, on the other hand, in proportion as it becomes more easy to obtain free labour, must the price of slaves decrease in the market, till at last it may fall to nothing.

* What are those kinds of employment for which free labour may not be made available?

It is obvious, therefore, that the market price of slaves is the only just criterion by which the completeness of the indemnity to the owner can be measured; and the moment we admit of a departure from this criterion, we open a door for the grossest injustice and oppression. It is by this rule that the valuation of an English Jury, sworn to decide justly between litigant parties, is guided; and it is by the same rule that, in the West Indies, the sworn appraisers ought to be guided in their estimate of the slave's value. They cannot, indeed, depart from this rule on either side of the Atlantic, without incurring the guilt of gross injustice, if not of perjury.

A most striking illustration of the view now given of this subject has just been furnished in Trinidad, and has appeared in papers recently laid before Parliament by his Majesty's command. (Part II. 1827.)

Pamela Monro, a female slave, eighteen years of age, whose mother was desirous of manumitting her, was ordered to be appraised in the usual way, by two appraisers, Thomas Le Gendre and William H. Burnley. These appraisers, not attending simply to the plain terms of the oath they had taken, but having recourse to sophistical inferences from the misinterpreted instruction of Lord Bathurst, declare their judgment to be, that "*Pamela Monro is fully worth the sum of 1200 Mexican dollars perfect (viz. 260*l.* sterling), and they do place that value upon her.*" That is to say, instead of giving, according to the tenor of the law, the fair and real value of this young woman in the market, which might be about 80*l.* or 85*l.* sterling, they form an imaginary and constructive valuation, which amounts to more than three times her fair and real value; a decision which has of course doomed the wretched Pamela to remain a slave.

The Protector of Slaves, Mr. Gloster, having been applied to on this occasion, has stated, that the appraisement of this poor girl far exceeded any other since the promulgation of the Order in Council. The very highest appraisement of any slave, even of the most valuable class, had been 169*l.*, and he was a head boiler, and a tolerable mason, carpenter, and blacksmith, whom his owner considered it impossible to replace. Another slave, who acted as a store-keeper and out-door collecting clerk, and who was in every respect a confidential servant, had been sold for 162*l.* 10*s.* sterling. Four head drivers had been also appraised, all very intelligent and confidential persons; one of them, capable of conducting a Cocoa Estate, at 150*l.* sterling; another at 140*l.*; another at 120*l.*; and a fourth (*whom his former master at*

this very time employs as an overseer for daily wages) at 97l. 10s. sterling.

The observations of the Protector of Slaves on this whole transaction are invaluable; and they amply confirm our views of the subject, while they prove the utter fallacy of those advanced by the Memorialists and their Learned Counsel. They are as follows :

“ The appraised value of slaves manumitted, under the provisions of the Order in Council, for the first eighteen months after it came into operation, does not average much more than one-half of the general average for the last twelve months.”—(That is to say, since the above quoted and unhappily misconstrued dispatch of Lord Bathurst became public.) “ The selling or market price of slaves, however, has not experienced a commensurate rise; and therefore it is evident, that the magnitude of the appraisements *lately made* are not occasioned by the increased value of slaves.

“ While the market price of slaves continues as at present, I would consider the application of other principles of appraisement to any common case, as *an injustice to the slave, and an encroachment on the rights conferred upon him by the law.*

“ To my apprehension, *the only fair criterion by which the value of a slave can be ascertained, is the usual market price*; and although that price has risen considerably within the last twelve months, the criterion afforded by it is far exceeded by the generality of appraisements.

“ It is also certain that the market price will rise in proportion to the decrease of the number of, or difficulty of procuring, *plantation slaves*. It is, therefore, *UNJUST to add to the real value, or market price, of the slave purchasing his freedom, a portion of the value of the estate to which the slave is attached*, until it becomes impracticable to continue the cultivation of the estate, in consequence of the impossibility of procuring a substitute for the slave who is to be enfranchised.*

“ The opposite opinions are very generally diffused, and, however controvertible they may be by argument, *I cannot indulge even the hope that they will be easily eradicated, or prevented from operating very seriously to the disadvantage of the slaves desirous of becoming free.*”

* And not even then, for even in that case the market price would still be the criterion of value.

“The principle,” (which principle was assumed and avowed by the appraisers of Pamela Monro) “that the value of the slave should be estimated at the amount of the capital required to yield a revenue equal to the hire which could be obtained for the slave, is evidently fallacious, from the fact that, every day, instances occur of slaves being bought for four hundred dollars,” (a third of the appraised value of Pamela Monro) “who, as Mr. Burnley mentions,” (of Pamela) “may be immediately hired at the rate of six dollars, or 1*l.* 6*s.* sterling per month, fed, clothed, and the capital guaranteed; the corresponding capital to which, at six per cent., (the ordinary rate of interest in Trinidad) is 1200 dollars, or 260*l.* sterling, the appraised value of Pamela Monro. Yet surely, it could not be pretended that the latter sum was the real value of a slave that was bought for one third of the sum, (400 dollars) and that could not be resold at an advanced price. This, I submit, *PROVES that the market price is the only just and fair criterion for determining the value of a slave.*”

This luminous and convincing exposition of the case is highly creditable to its author, Mr. Gloster; and the more so, because, being himself a West Indian, he was likely to be powerfully influenced by opinions which he states to be so widely diffused around him, and so interwoven with the interests and the prejudices of his brethren.

So undeniably just and reasonable in itself is the proposed method of ascertaining the indemnity due to the planter for the loss of his slave, that it is precisely the method which has been prescribed, by every legislature in the West Indies, whenever a slave is taken from his master for any public purpose, or is executed, or banished for a criminal offence. The value, in such case, is assessed by a Jury according to the fair market price. Had Pamela Monro, instead of being a claimant for freedom, been condemned to the gallows, she would have been equally lost to her owner; but in that case, would Messrs. Le Gendre and Burnley, or any other appraisers, have awarded to him, on their oaths, 1,200 Mexican dollars, as her fair and just appraisal?

On the whole, we think it has been clearly demonstrated, that the allegations and complaints of the memorialists have no just foundation; that the prayer founded upon them ought not to be listened to; and that His Majesty's Government are bound, not only by their own pledges, but by the most forcible reasons of state policy, as well as of humanity and justice, to persevere in their proposed plan of manumission.

It no less clearly appears, however, from what has passed in Trinidad, that even the binding solemnity of an oath, may not secure, in the execution of that plan, a fair measure of justice to the slave; and that if the Government and Parliament wish to fulfil their pledges, steps must forthwith be taken to obviate the effects of such open and deliberate deviations from fairness and impartiality. And if even the sanctions interposed, in such a case as this, are unequal to resist the influence of that sympathy, which the holders of slaves feel in favour of the master, and against the slave; how can the Government and the Parliament continue to entrust to the conscience and feeling of such men, the more difficult and delicate and complicated task of legislating for their wretched dependants? Do not such transactions as these, as well as such petitions and memorials as we have been considering, add irresistible force to the conclusion at which the country at large has long since arrived—that “It would be the height of fatuity to continue to look for any useful reforms from the masters of slaves. The work must be undertaken and executed by the British Parliament. They alone are competent to the task. And in no other way can the slightest hope be entertained, either of effectually mitigating the rigours of colonial bondage, or of finally abolishing that opprobrious state of society.”

Notwithstanding the pains we have taken to confute the objections of the Memorialists to the proposed plan of Manumission, *it is necessary we should guard against being considered as acquiescing in the justice of the principle of the measure itself.* We deem it, indeed, an infinite improvement on the former system. But the obligation to indemnify the planter, for the liberation of his slaves, does not justly attach to *them*, but to the public in common with the planter. Indeed, if there be any one of the parties more clearly entitled to indemnity than another, it is the slave himself, who, by the present arrangement, has this injury added to all his other wrongs, that he is condemned to pay the penalty of the criminal conduct of his oppressors.

THE
FURTHER PROGRESS
OF
COLONIAL REFORM;
BEING
AN ANALYSIS

OF
THE COMMUNICATION MADE TO PARLIAMENT BY HIS MAJESTY,
AT THE CLOSE OF THE LAST SESSION,
RESPECTING THE MEASURES TAKEN FOR IMPROVING THE CONDITION OF
THE SLAVE POPULATION IN THE BRITISH COLONIES.

Comprising the Period from January 1826, to May 1827.

[In Continuation of two Pamphlets, "The Slave Colonies of Great Britain," &c. and "The Progress of Colonial Reform," containing a View of the advance made in carrying into effect the Recommendations of His Majesty, with respect to Negro Slavery, between May 1823, and December 1825.]

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THE
FURTHER PROGRESS
OF
COLONIAL REFORM,
&c.

IN the House of Commons on the 1st of March 1826, and afterwards at the close of the session of Parliament, Mr. Canning, after stating in strong terms his disapprobation of the past conduct of the colonial legislatures; expressed a hope that, if a little more space were given them for a fair trial, the best effects might follow. "If, however," he added, "due advantage is not taken by them of that space which shall be allowed them, it may then become the duty, if not of Parliament to take the matter out of the hands of Government, at least of Government to call upon the Parliament to arm them with additional power. It is, therefore, the design of the Government at home, to take such steps as shall bring the intentions of the colonial legislatures to a fair trial. It is their purpose to direct the introduction of a bill into each of the legislatures, in its next session, embodying the Trinidad Order in Council, so as to ensure the acceptance, rejection, or modification of the recommendations which it contains. I should much regret that Parliament should take any step to intercept the course of this plan, which, if it succeeds, will be more acceptable than any forcible measure; and if it should fail, Parliament will at least have the consolation of not having resorted to ultimate measures, until they had exhausted the expectation of any thing being done by the colonies themselves. Coercion must be applied to confirmed obstinacy; but the degree of contumacy has not yet arisen which calls for its exercise."*

To the same effect, on the 7th of March 1826, Earl Bathurst, in the House of Lords, observed that—"Bills embodying the various pro-

* Report of Debate in Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. X. p. 100 to 102.

visions of the Trinidad Order in Council, would now be sent to the Governors of the several West India Colonies, by whom they would be proposed to the consideration of their legislative assemblies, and the Government would soon be in possession of their decisions upon them. From the earnest manner in which the subject would be recommended to their attention, he did hope that it would have a successful result. But should it prove otherwise, it would then be for their Lordships to consider what course it would be expedient to adopt, to carry their measures into effect.”*

The result of this new effort of the Government was made known to Parliament, not at the beginning of the session of 1827, as was expected, but at its very close, when it was impossible to make any use of the communication. This circumstance, together with the unsettled state of His Majesty's Government, which had rendered vain the hope of any beneficial discussion of the subject in Parliament, obliged the advocates of Colonial Reform, though most reluctantly, to postpone to a future session any movements for the promotion of that object.

The information which has at length been laid before Parliament on this great question, is contained in 600 closely-printed folio pages, under the following title,

“Papers presented to Parliament by His Majesty's Command, in explanation of the measures adopted by His Majesty's Government, for the melioration of the condition of the slave population in His Majesty's possessions; in continuation of the papers presented in the year 1826—Part I. and Part II. 1827.”

The report of the proceedings in each of the colonial legislatures is introduced by certain circular communications from Lord Bathurst to the Governor. These circulars exhibit slight variations from each other, arising from the somewhat varying circumstances of the different colonies, but as in all *essential* points they are identical, it will be sufficient to state the substance of any one of them, in order to show the nature and bearing of the instructions thus issued by His Majesty's Government, in fulfilment of the above pledge to Parliament.

The despatches in question bear date the 19th of March, and the 21st of May, 1826.

* Report of Debate, Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. X. p. 109.

In the former, Lord Bathurst recapitulates the steps he had already taken to bring the subject before the colonial legislatures, and having adverted to the continued non-fulfilment of his hopes of amelioration, goes on to observe, that he has now to communicate to them the unanimous concurrence of the House of Lords, in the Resolutions of the House of Commons, of the 15th of May, 1823.

“In order to enable you,” his Lordship proceeds, “to bring the whole subject under the consideration of the assembly, in a more distinct shape, I shall take an early opportunity of sending out to you all the measures contained in the Trinidad Order of Council, classed under separate heads, and accompanied with such explanations as may be necessary, with a view of placing in a clearer light the effect of some of those provisions which I have reason to believe have been misunderstood. On the receipt of this communication you will be able to take the proper steps for having bills drawn up for carrying these measures severally into effect, in such manner as may be most conformable to the existing laws. When these bills have been duly prepared, you will cause them to be brought under the consideration of the assembly, so that the assembly may have them separately before them, and either pass them in the shape in which they will be introduced, or make such amendments, or modifications of their provisions as the assembly may deem expedient, unless (what I anxiously deprecate) they should come to the decision of rejecting them.

“The assembly will then be placed in full possession of all which His Majesty’s Government contemplate for carrying into effect the resolutions of the two houses of Parliament; and the result of their deliberations will enable His Majesty’s Government to judge whether it will be necessary to take any other course for the attainment of that object. If you should have it in your power to announce to me, that the Council and Assembly have agreed to bills substantially carrying into effect all the measures which have been brought under their consideration, it will only remain for me, in communicating to you His Majesty’s allowance of these bills, to congratulate you and the legislature on the establishment of a system, both for the improvement of the condition of the slave population, and for providing for the manumission of the slaves or their families on a principle of equitable appraisement:—which system will then have fully carried into effect the resolutions of the two Houses of Parliament. Nothing will then

remain but to provide for the improvement of the judicial system, and for its accommodation to the present wants of the whole community, including the slave population."

The circular despatch of the 21st of May 1826, announces the transmission of the promised bills.

"These enclosures," Lord Bathurst says, "relate to the eight following subjects: 1st, the office of Protector or Guardian of Slaves; 2nd, the admission of the evidence of slaves in civil and criminal cases; 3rd, the manumission of slaves; 4th, the intermarriage of slaves; 5th, the observance of Sunday, and the abolition of Sunday markets on that day; 6th, the acquisition of property by slaves, and the establishment of saving banks for the better protection of it; 7th, the separation of families under judicial process; and 8th, the punishment of slaves, with the record to be kept of such punishments, when inflicted by the authority of the owner."

These drafts of bills, his Lordship states, are accompanied by explanatory notes, and by copies of his official correspondence on this subject with the Governors of Trinidad and Demarara, from which, he adds, will be learnt the views taken, by Government, of the various objections urged against the provisions of the Order in Council, and of the points in that order which are of primary and essential importance. His Lordship then proceeds thus—

"I am perfectly aware of the difficulty, [if not impossibility, of framing in this country, on so comprehensive a subject, enactments which are to have their operation in ———. I am aware also, that upon some of the topics comprised in these enclosures, the wishes of His Majesty's Government have already, to a certain extent, been anticipated by the existing laws, and that, without a very intimate and practical acquaintance with those laws, it may, perhaps, be impracticable to frame, with safety, new legislative provisions on the same or similar subjects.

"In transmitting, therefore, to you, the enclosed papers, I do not propose them as drafts which could be passed without a careful revision, nor probably, without some material alterations. My object in this communication has rather been to explain anew, under separate heads, and in the fullest manner, the measures which His Majesty's Government desire to introduce; and I have for this purpose adopted the form and language of legislative acts, because in no other way

could those views be explained with equal accuracy and precision. His Majesty will, however, be ready to confirm any laws in which the legislature of —— may effectually embody these principles, and give effect to those intentions, however much such laws may depart from the enclosed papers in arrangement, language, or minor details.”

The Governors are further directed to consult the law officers of the Crown, as to the form and structure of the proposed laws, and then to introduce them to the legislatures, “with such discretion, and with such a regard to their constitutional privileges, as to afford no reasonable cause for any jealousy or complaint on their part.”

They are likewise instructed to report fully, and with as little delay as possible, the progress which may have been made, and also the reasons which may have prevented the adoption of any of the clauses, distinguishing what may have been enacted and what rejected; and in cases where former acts may be thought to have rendered further legislation unnecessary, copies of such previous acts are to be sent.

“I have thus once more,” observes his Lordship in conclusion, “directed your attention to this most important subject; and I cannot close the present despatch without again reminding you, that His Majesty’s Government will feel the most lively interest in the result of the deliberations of the legislative council and assembly in the ensuing session. I am not disposed to anticipate the continued rejection of enactments so earnestly and anxiously looked for by both Houses of Parliament, and by every class of society in this kingdom. On the contrary, I must still hope that it will shortly be in my power to lay, before His Majesty, Acts fully carrying into effect the spirit of the various provisions, which, by His Majesty’s commands, I have now the honour to transmit to you.”

Before proceeding to state the effect produced by this communication, it will be necessary to make a few remarks on the communication itself.

Lord Bathurst directs that the bills, for carrying his propositions into effect, be drawn up in such a manner as shall be “most conformable to the existing laws.” This instruction may possibly mean no more than that the terms used, or the forms prescribed, in the new acts, shall be in conformity with existing usage. But if it is to be understood as implying the necessity of conforming to the principles and the spirit of the existing slave laws, its expediency may be fairly ques-

tioned. No one who has formed an adequate conception of the unjust and barbarous character of those laws can hope for improvement in such a course; on the contrary, he will feel that it is only by a wide departure from their principles, and a general counteraction of their spirit, that any real amelioration is to be effected.

Lord Bathurst informs the Assemblies, that the eight Bills which he has sent to them will put them "in *full* possession of *all* which His Majesty's Government contemplate for carrying into effect the resolutions of the two Houses of Parliament." This is certainly a startling statement. Is it to be understood as a renunciation, on the part of His Majesty's Government, of any progressive measures of improvement (judicial reforms excepted) beyond those provided for in these Bills? If so, it appears to be a manifest departure from the Resolutions of 1823, and from the assurances given to Parliament and the public on the subject by His Majesty's Government. On the 16th of March, 1824, when Mr. Canning detailed to the House of Commons the particulars of the Trinidad Order in Council, which he represented as the intended model of reform for all the Colonies, and which, though with material drawbacks, now forms the very *corpus* of Lord Bathurst's eight Bills, he was strongly urged by Mr. Baring, Mr. Manning, Mr. Blair, and other West Indians, to draw there the line, and there fix at once where concession was to stop, so as to settle the question for ever. Mr. Canning repelled this proposition with considerable warmth. There were persons, he said, connected with the West Indies, who wished to force Government to give a pledge that no more should be done than was now proposed; but he would not commit himself on the subject. He would not consent to be fettered by any engagements express or implied. He would not be led by either side, or in either sense, to declarations from which it might be impossible to advance and dangerous to retreat. It would be improper either to declare an intention of stopping at the present point, or to hold out pledges of ulterior and accelerated measures. We must proceed with extreme circumspection, watching the signs of the times, and taking advantage of every occurrence; but we must reserve to ourselves a discretion and a freedom of action, which it would be madness to throw away.*

But does not this despatch of Lord Bathurst commit the very error

* Debate of 16th of March, 1824, p. 71.

which Mr. Canning so energetically deprecated? His Lordship says that he has put the Governors in *full* possession of *all* the measures contemplated by his Majesty's Government; and he afterwards adds, still more unequivocally, that the system embraced by the eight Bills, (the Bills themselves falling short of the original Order in Council for Trinidad,) is considered by him as *fully* carrying into effect the resolutions of Parliament; and that when it is adopted, *nothing* will remain to be done but to improve the judicial administration. If we are right in apprehending that, in thus fettering himself, Lord Bathurst has incurred the very evil against which Mr. Canning was careful to guard, and has abandoned the ground which the Government engaged to maintain; then it would seem expedient, when the subject is next brought before Parliament, that care should be taken to obtain a disavowal of so questionable a proceeding.

Lord Bathurst's compliment to the Colonial Assemblies, as if in their existing statutes they had anticipated, to a certain extent, the wishes of His Majesty's Government, though wholly unmerited, may be passed over in silence; but when he speaks of the *difficulty*, if not *impossibility*, of framing, in this country, enactments which are to operate in the West Indies; and of the *impracticability* of framing new legislative provisions on the subject of slavery; it cannot but excite general astonishment. Is not this virtually to renounce the *moral* right, at least, of legislative interference, on the part of this country, in the concerns of the West Indies? And what possible ground can there be for such a renunciation? If the allegations were true, Lord Bathurst himself has incurred a heavy responsibility; the general tenor of his official conduct having been in contradiction to them. The Trinidad Order in Council, which contained an entire new slave code, was framed, not in that island, but in his Lordship's office in Downing Street. What extraordinary revolution then has taken place to render that work of legislation so difficult, impossible, impracticable, in 1826, which, in 1824, was so easily executed, and also, in the estimation of his Lordship, so wisely and skilfully executed, as to serve for the future and finished exemplar of all colonial slave legislation? The despatch seems wholly to have overlooked the fact that this code, so framed in Downing Street, was imposed on the colony of Trinidad without qualification or reserve. His Majesty's Government, therefore, must have been convinced of the wisdom, safety, and practicability of this legislative act, and of its

adaptation to the circumstances of the Colonies, or they never would have adopted it as their own measure, and peremptorily enforced its reception in Trinidad, even in direct opposition to the opinions of the whole body of the Planters. Nor does their conviction of its wisdom seem to have been altered by a more matured experience, for its adoption is still urged on all the Colonial Legislatures, as the only means of escape from the direct interference of Parliament. The language of the despatch, therefore, on this subject, seems altogether inexplicable; or if the despatch really expresses his Lordship's sentiments, it is difficult to imagine how he should have been induced first to issue a finished enactment on this impracticable subject in the island of Trinidad, and, after the lapse of two years, again to recommend that enactment, divided into eight Bills, to the adoption of the local legislature of every Slave Colony belonging to His Majesty. But independently of this circumstance, it seems not very reasonable to plead incompetency, in the Councils of this country, considering the legal aid they may command, for that task of legislation which is delegated so freely to the Planters of the Bahamas, Bermuda, Tortola, &c. &c.

Before quitting the consideration of this despatch, it seems necessary to re-state the points in which the Trinidad Order in Council itself, and consequently the Bills framed according to the latest modification of it, fall below the expectations originally held out to Parliament and the public, by His Majesty's Government, on the subject of Colonial Reform.

1. Though entitled an Order for "*promoting the religious instruction*," as well as "*improving the condition of the slaves*," it nevertheless comprises no provisions whatever either for their education or for their religious instruction.

2. It does not abolish Sunday markets, but, on the most unsatisfactory grounds, continues still to sanction them. It proposes, indeed, at some undefined future time, to abolish them; but three years have passed, and not only are Sunday markets still lawful, but they are so regulated by law as to produce great additional hardship and inconvenience to the slaves, whom the Order was expressly intended to benefit.*

3. Equivalent time was to have been allowed the slave, in lieu of

* See for a more detailed view of this subject the Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter, No. XI. p. 132—135.

Sunday, for raising food and for marketing. This stipulation has not been fulfilled, either in the Trinidad Order or in any of the Bills founded upon it.*

4. The evidence of slaves is admitted, but with such limitations as almost entirely to destroy the efficiency of the measure.† :

5. The slave, in obtaining rights of property, continues debarred, under heavy penalties, from raising or vending any article of exportable produce.‡

6. The separation of families by sale is only prohibited in the single case of *judicial* sales.§

7. Slaves may still be sold detached from the estate to which they belong.

8. No record, as respects arbitrary punishments by the master, is required, except in the case of *plantation* slaves.||

9. The Protector of Slaves, though he may not be a proprietor of slave plantations, in the particular colony in which he acts as Protector, may hold *personal slaves* even there to any amount, and may hold slave plantations in every other colony.¶

10. The Assistant Protectors of Slaves may possess slaves, whether predial or domestic, without any limitation.**

But besides these deviations from the course which it was originally proposed to pursue, there are some other points materially affecting the happiness of the slave which are wholly omitted. One is, that the hours of labour are not fixed.†† Another, that it sanctions the cruel and unjust principle of authorizing the infliction of severe corporal chastisement on the complaining slave, who, under all his disadvantages as a witness, shall not have proved the truth of his complaint.‡‡

However excellent may have been the intention of the framers of the regulations in the Trinidad Order, respecting manumission, they have failed in guarding them from most enormous abuse. It is only necessary to refer, in proof of this, to the case of Pamela Monro, as it stands in the papers of 1827, Part II. p. 265—271. §§

Having thus given as succinct an account, as is consistent with

* Ibid. p. 134.

† Ibid. p. 136—138.

‡ Ibid. p. 139, 147.

§ Ibid. p. 139.

|| Ibid. p. 140, 141.

¶ Ibid. p. 142.

** Ibid. p. 143.

†† Ibid. p. 143.

‡‡ Ibid. p. 144.

§§ See also Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter, No. XXVII. p. 70.

clearness, of the proceedings of His Majesty's Government, in carrying into effect the promise made to Parliament, in the session of 1826, on the subject of Colonial Reform; the next step will be to shew the effects which have resulted from these proceedings in each of the Slave Colonies respectively, taking them, for the sake of convenience, in their alphabetical order.

I. ANTIGUA.

The circular communications of Lord Bathurst, as above described, having been submitted to the Assembly of Antigua, were received in such a manner as induced Sir Patrick Ross, the Governor, to signify to his Lordship, in a letter of the 8th August, 1826, that he entertained "the strongest doubts of the deliberations of the Assembly of Antigua, on this important subject, terminating in a manner at all answerable to the expectations of His Majesty's Government and of the British Parliament." This unfavourable anticipation of the Governor has proved to be correct. The legislature of Antigua have done nothing.*

II. BAHAMAS.

On the 8th of January, 1827, Mr. Munnings, the acting Governor, informed Lord Bathurst, that the eight Bills transmitted by his Lordship, having been first adapted to the circumstances of the Colony by the law officers of the crown, were brought by the Attorney General before the Assembly, and, after having undergone the investigation of a Select Committee, were rejected by the House.† The Report of the Select Committee exhibits the reasons which led to this rejection. They are in substance as follows :

1. The office of Guardian and Protector of Slaves is uncalled for, while it would burden the Colony with an expense which it is unable to bear. And as it is thus impracticable to establish in these islands any system of slave guardianship, none of the enactments connected with that system can of course be carried into effect there.‡

2. To keep on plantations a record of punishments, to be periodically transmitted to England, is, from local circumstances, particularly the illiterate state of the planters, likewise wholly impracticable.§

* Papers printed by His Majesty's command, 1827, Part II. p. 27—47.

† Ibid. Part I. p. 132.

‡ Ibid. p. 157, 158.

§ Ibid. p. 158.

3. With respect to the punishment of female slaves also, the Committee deem it impracticable to substitute any other mode in the place of flogging. Indeed, all intelligent slave owners hold, they say, that females generally require more frequent corporal correction than males, for with them originates a large proportion of the crimes for which males suffer. They question whether confinement would be any punishment at all to a negro slave; * nay, by being confined, females would enjoy at their ease an exemption from labour, while their husbands and children and aged parents would be the real sufferers. †

4. The Committee have no objection to abolish the *driving* whip, local circumstances rendering it less requisite in the Bahamas than in the other islands. But the use of the whip, as a punishment for crime, they gravely plead for, on the ground of its being a scriptural ordinance. And they tell the Government, that the proposed reform should have begun at home, in the army and navy, “it being idle to expect efficacy from a naked precept, at such open variance with their own example.” ‡

5. They decidedly object to the interval of twenty-four hours between the perpetration of an offence and its punishment. They approve the principle of delay, but cannot admit the practice on account of its inconvenience. §

6. They also decidedly object to the clause which decrees the forfeiture, to the Crown, of slaves cruelly and illegally punished. They have no objection that the suffering slave should be sold to a better master, but they cannot understand why the injured party should be made free. || Then follows a striking specimen of West Indian logic,

* Ibid, p. 159. What a debased and brutalized state of society does this argument indicate! When, however, it is the object of these gentlemen to shew that a *Protector* of Slaves is unnecessary, they talk (p. 157.) of “the superior moral condition and intelligence of the Bahama slaves, in comparison with those in the sugar colonies generally.” And yet they must go on flogging their women! And to these highly moral slaves confinement is no punishment!

† Are negroes then wholly destitute of natural affection? The Planters know too well the contrary. What more common or more effective expedient are they in the habit of adopting, for bringing back, to all the horrors of a cart-whipping, a runaway son or husband, than that of placing a mother or a wife in the stocks till his return? And what influence could such an expedient have, if to these females confinement were no punishment?

‡ Ibid, p. 159.

§ Ibid

|| Is no compensation then due to the maimed or mutilated slave?

which, while it proceeds as usual on false assumptions, incautiously betrays that state of ungoverned feeling, among the planters, which imperiously calls for the very restraints they deprecate. "So long," they say, "as any considerable portion of the slave population would, if free, be unable or unwilling to subsist otherwise than by rapine, theft, or other crimes,* the Committee consider all emancipations but those on the score of character, or merit of some kind, as a public injury:" and, they add, "if freedom be the reward of insolence or other provocation on the part of the slave, *sufficient to transport every choleric owner beyond the bounds of discretion*, it would, of course, be the very worst class of slaves that would be likely to become first free."†

The Committee, however, recommend, that the consolidated slave law passed in 1824,‡ should be forthwith amended. An act to that effect was accordingly passed in December, 1826, which it will be now necessary to examine. This, however, it may be premised, is a most inconvenient mode of legislation in the case of enactments which are to regulate the conduct of masters and slaves, and in which every thing should be as clear and simple as possible. An act of seventy-seven clauses was passed in 1824; and, in 1826, another act of fifty-seven clauses more is framed to alter, explain, and amend the first, thus perplexing and involving instead of smoothing and simplifying the avenues to justice.

This course is the more to be lamented, because one of the very reasons which the legislature of the Bahamas assign for rejecting the proposed record of punishments on plantations is, that "*few planters, or at least few of the persons in charge of plantations in the Bahamas,*

* This assumption is proved to be untrue by that part of this very Report, which affirms the great progress made by "the negro race generally," in "their taste for the comforts of civilized life," and "the means of acquiring them;" and in "the improvement of their physical condition," with which "their advancement in morals and religion has happily kept pace." (p. 156.) What reliance can be placed on the statements of men, who, in the compass of two pages, can so stultify and falsify themselves?

† Ibid, p. 159. Are there then no laws in the Bahamas to punish delinquency, that masters must be thus allowed to wreak their uncontrolled fury on their slaves, in the very moment of exasperation? By the same criterion of merit, which the Bahama legislature would make the sole condition on which freedom should be given to the slave, ought these choleric owners themselves to be doomed to slavery as unfit to enjoy freedom.

‡ See the "Slave Colonies of Great Britain," p. 4; and the Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. 11, p. 151, for an account of this law.

are capable of keeping records of any kind ;” and that they “ are seldom in a situation to get *literal* assistance :” in correct English they cannot, generally speaking, read or write.* Now, what will those learned persons, to say nothing of their slaves, make of the 137 clauses which have been framed, certainly with much technical amplification and ambiguity, to regulate the ordinary duties of master and slave ? It is *literally* throwing dust in the eyes of the Parliament and people of England. Yet the Assembly gravely affirm that the colony has no need of an official protector of slaves, and they actually refuse to appoint such an officer. It might have been supposed that, in proportion to the admitted extent of their own ignorance, would have been their desire of obtaining, in the shape of an officer selected by the crown, the *literal* assistance they so much need. But to proceed to this bill of amendments. †

Section 1, does not *repeal*, but merely *suspends* all the former barbarous enactments of the negro code, excepting the single consolidated act of 1824, which, however, retains in full and undiminished action no small part of those barbarities. ‡

Sect. 2, invalidates all future manumissions unless effected by will, nuncupative or written, or by deed ; or which may have been executed in fraud of creditors. This is narrowing, not enlarging the right of manumission.

Sect. 3, enacts that so much of a particular section of the Act of 1824, as declares void all manumissions of slaves who are incapable of labour by sickness, age, or infirmity, should be *suspended* during the continuance of this Act.

This clause curiously illustrates the indifference to negro feeling and negro comfort, which prevails among the white legislators of the Bahamas. In 1824, they make void a certain class of manumissions by a stroke of their pen. Persons already in possession of that best earthly boon, freedom, are suddenly divested of it without any more ceremony than would be employed in altering the merest matter of form. No inquiry is instituted as to the rights affected by it, no measure of compensation (about which they can clamour so loudly in their own case,) thought of for the suffering parties ; but a stern, unqualified decree of disfranchisement issues forth from those petty despots, and at once

* Papers by Command, 1827, Part I, p. 158.

† Ibid, p. 161—180.

‡ See the Slave Colonies of Great Britain, p. 4—11.

strips a number of his Majesty's liege subjects of all the rights they had acquired by enfranchisement, and reduces them a second time to the level of brute beasts. After two years, however, this sentence, at the suggestion of Lord Bathurst, is reversed, and these disfranchised individuals are restored to such freedom as the inheritors of negro blood are permitted to enjoy in the Bahamas. But, even this freedom is to last only "during the continuance of this Act," an act which perhaps may have been already disallowed, or if not, the duration of which is actually limited by one of its clauses to the month of January, 1829. What a strange style of legislation is this ! What an outrage on all the feelings of its subjects, or rather its victims ! What a violation of every principle of the commonest humanity and justice !

Sect. 4, is also an amendment of a part only of a former clause ; and its object is to deprive the keepers of jails or workhouses of the power of inflicting corporal punishments, on slaves committed to their custody, without the authority of the owner or manager, or of some court or magistrate. But this is scarcely an improvement, jail floggings having been generally inflicted by the jailors, only at the desire of the owners or managers, or of a magistrate or court.

Sect. 5, slaves alleged, or suspected to be runaways, may, *by a single magistrate*, be committed to jail for one year, or "otherwise disposed of by him according to law ;" and at the end of the year, if not claimed, may, by the magistrate, be either discharged from custody, or "otherwise dealt with according to law." (What is it to be otherwise dealt with according to law ?) The clause, however, in the Act of 1824, ordering unclaimed runaways to be sold as slaves, if not claimed within the year, is to be *suspended* "during the continuance of this Act." How very vague and uncertain, as well as cruel and unjust, are such enactments as these ?

Sect. 6, is equally vague and confused, referring to parts of no less than three sections of the former act, which it suspends or modifies. It inflicts fine, banishment, and even imprisonment for life, on persons of free condition ; and as much as 200 lashes on slaves, who "shall knowingly aid, abet, harbour, or conceal a runaway slave."

Sect. 7, contains such an unjust provision, that even the Acting Governor, Mr. Munnings, himself a planter, is shocked by it.* It enacts

* "I could have wished," he says, "that this clause had been left out of the

that “*any* free negro, mulatto, mustee, Indian, or other person of colour,” who “shall use *any* threats of unlawful violence, or *any* scandalous or other abusive language, to *any* white person or persons,” he “shall and may, on complaint, *under oath of the party menaced or insulted*, be lawfully tried for the same” by *two magistrates*, or by *one magistrate, and two white freeholders*, and, on conviction, be fined £20, or confined for non-payment, for six months.

Sect. 8, makes it a misdemeanour to employ the driving whip to compel labour, a practice, which from local circumstances, was little, if at all, in use in the Bahamas; as there, the Assembly tell us, from the smallness of the properties, the slaves on plantations are domesticated with their owners, while numbers are employed in navigation.—In point of fact, their labours are of a kind which precludes their being driven. To this necessary peculiarity in the condition of the Bahama slaves, may be attributed their rapid increase.

Sect. 9, preserves to the master or overseer the power of inflicting thirty-nine lashes on any slave, of either sex, without specifying the offence, provided the slave's former lacerations shall be healed, and provided the owner or overseer himself be present to witness the infliction. He need not, however, be present when the jailer or workhouse-keeper inflicts such punishment by his authority.

Sect. 10, provides, that henceforward women are not to be *stripped* and *flogged*, in the presence of any males, *except the person or persons ordering the punishment, and the person or persons inflicting the same!!*

Sect. 11 and 12, make it lawful for an owner to commute flogging for other modes of punishment, (a power he could, of course, always lawfully exercise,) under certain regulations; among others, that if pregnant women are so punished as to cause the risk of abortion, the person inflicting the punishment shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanour.

Sect. 13—20, form a most complicated series of provisions on the subject of Slave Evidence, so complicated as to render the pretended concessions which they involve, almost a nullity.—All slaves, not natives of

Act; but, as punishment by flogging was not insisted on, and as free persons of colour have got rid of some old obnoxious Acts, which were in force against them, I do not deem this clause an objection sufficiently strong to prevent my assenting to the Act.” Papers, &c. 1827, Part I. p. 133.

Africa,* who have been five years in the colony, who have been *sufficiently* instructed in religion to understand the nature of an oath, and are certified to be so by any clergyman of the Church of England or minister of the kirk of Scotland,† shall, during the continuance of this Act, be admitted as witnesses in all civil and criminal causes.—But then follow the exceptions, that is to say, the cases in which even the slaves who may come under the above rigorous description, are debarred from giving evidence. 1. All prosecutions of free persons, by way of libel, plaint, or otherwise, in cases of penalty, or forfeiture, or otherwise, when the facts are tried, or liable to be tried, otherwise than by a jury at common law. 2. All prosecutions of free persons, by way of *ex-officio* information or otherwise, in any court of law or equity, even when parts of the case may be tried by a jury. 3. All prosecutions against the owner of the slave offered as a witness. 4. All prosecutions of white persons charged with offences punishable by death. 5. All facts which may have occurred prior to the date of the certificate of competency. 6. All cases, whether civil or criminal, involving either directly, or indirectly, or by implication, incidentally, or in any manner whatsoever, any facts touching any right or claim, or supposed right or claim of any slave, to be, or become free or in any manner exempt from servitude, or in any manner to affect the full and complete title, claim, &c. of any owner of such slave. 7. All cases of wills, or deeds, or other instruments manumitting slaves, or relating to the manumission of slaves. 8. All examinations *de bene esse*, or otherwise than *viva voce*, and in open court.

Besides these sweeping exceptions, which seem to comprise all that had previously been conceded in favour of the slave, the clergyman's certificate is not to preclude any magistrate, or jury, from examining the witness as to competency, on his *voir dire* or otherwise; or as to the degree of his religious knowledge. And, moreover, a clause (the 20th) is framed for the express purpose of tranquillizing the over-tender and too scrupulous consciences of the Bahama Planters. Lest

* Thus shutting out at once all Christian slaves, who may have been introduced into the colony from Africa, even in infancy.

† Mr. Munnings complains that the power of giving these certificates is restricted to *clergymen*, in consequence of which no slaves can obtain them, but those living at New Providence and Turks Islands. p. 133.

any of them should be disturbed by an apprehension lest the evidence of any one or more witnesses, when not contradicted, should be legally entitled to full faith and credit, though the court and jury may have cause to question their veracity, and in order “*to remove the objections to the admission of slave evidence,*” it is therefore enacted that it shall be competent for all courts, magistrates, inquests, juries grand, special, or petty, to discredit or reject, wholly or in part, the evidence of all witnesses examined before them, although not contradicted or impugned by other evidence, if only there be any fair ground of improbability, or of bad character, or of presumption of wrong motives, on which they may conscientiously refuse credence to the evidence in question.—We have here a new chapter in the law of evidence.

Sect. 21, restrains certain classes of enfranchised persons from being admitted to prove any facts bearing, directly or indirectly, on the freedom of any alleged slave, or affecting the life of any white person, or affecting the person, liberty, or property, of their late owners.

Sect. 22—25, contain regulations respecting the manner of proceeding by subpœna, or by writ of Habeas Corpus, to obtain the evidence of slaves.

Sect. 26—31, contain regulations of a complicated and ineffective kind as to the marriages of slaves. Parts of the Act of 1824, are first *suspended*. Then slaves are permitted to intermarry, with consent of their owner; and the marriage may be performed by any licensed free white public teacher, or by a magistrate; and is to be registered. But such marriage is not to convey any rights inconsistent with the slaves’ duties to his owner, or to the Government.

Sect. 32, makes void all separate sales of husbands and wives, or reputed husbands and wives, and their children under fourteen years of age. This is done, however, not by a direct enactment, but by a reference to the former Act.

Sect. 33—35. Sunday labour is not expressly forbidden, but Sunday markets are restricted to the hour of nine in the morning—a mode of proceeding which both continues the desecration of the Sabbath, and is most onerous and inconvenient to the slave.

Sect. 36. Slaves are permitted to possess all kinds of property real and personal, except arms and ammunition, and to bring and defend actions by their *prochain ami*, who must, however, be a *free person* appointed by the court.

Sect. 37—42, respect a bank of deposit for the slaves, with rules for disposing of and judicially attaching their property; but they contain some restraining clauses which go far to defeat the whole scheme.

Sect. 43, enables owners to prevent their slaves from growing, raising, or dealing in the same articles with their masters, as salt, corn, cattle, live stock of any kind for market, cotton wool, &c., but not to prevent them from growing sugar cane, or raising fruit or vegetables, or ground provisions.*

Sect. 44—51, regulate the manumission of slaves.—All fees and taxes are abolished, except 4s. sterling for recording the manumission. Slaves may purchase their own freedom, and that of wives and children, at such price as may be agreed between the parties interested. If they differ as to price, two magistrates may name a referee for each of the parties, who, if they disagree, may name an umpire. These are to swear that they will fairly, justly, and equitably estimate the compensation, “not merely according to their views of the probable market price of such slave, if exposed to sale as such, but with due regard also to such further remuneration as the owner may shew himself entitled to, in consequence of any loss or damage he may sustain by reason of his being deprived of the services of such slave.” This novel principle of appreciation obviously goes to destroy the beneficial effect of the other regulations respecting manumission. (See the Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. 27, p. 68, &c.) But it is scarcely less destructive of it than the provision in the 51st clause, that no children under fourteen years of age shall be manumitted, under any circumstances whatsoever, without the consent of their owner; and further, that no slave shall obtain his freedom without his owner’s consent, unless he shall shew that the funds for his redemption have been *honestly* acquired.—It is perfect mockery to call such laws, laws for facilitating manumission.

Sect. 52—56, are provisions of mere form.

Sect. 57, limits the duration of the Act to the 28th of January, 1829, or to the end of the then next session of Assembly.

We have gone into a great length of detail in analysing this law, because it is really one of the best, perhaps the very best, of the ameliorating acts, which have been passed in the West Indies. And yet, what

* And yet planters vehemently complain of the want of industry in the negro. Why then these prohibitions?

is it, when carefully examined, but mere unmeaning verbiage; enactments which enact nothing; apparent concessions which are drawn back by the multiplicity and largeness of the exceptions; and pretended reforms which leave every evil of slavery untouched? And let it not be forgotten that, besides all this idle and useless parade of legislation, calculated for no purpose but to blind the eyes of the people of this country, there still stands in full and stern authority the whole code of 1824, of which a detailed account will be found in “The Slave Colonies of Great Britain, or a picture of Negro Slavery, drawn by the Colonists themselves,” p. 4—11.

III. BARBADOES.

In the same pamphlet, “The Slave Colonies of Great Britain,” (p. 11—20.) is given, also in considerable detail, the provisions of the Consolidated Slave Law of Barbadoes, passed in March, 1825. The law itself, of which the Barbadians boasted as an effort of liberal and humane legislation, which, “in the night-fall of their existence,” will endear to posterity the remembrance of those who have given life to that splendid code, was nevertheless, as Mr. Brougham well characterized it in the House of Commons, little better than a mass of the most revolting enormities. Lord Bathurst appears to have entertained a similar opinion of it. His Lordship regrets to say, that he finds in it “*none of the recommended reforms*,” while it contains some provisions which oblige him to submit it to the legislature for revision.* By way of aiding them in that revision, he transmits a copy of his circular communication and of the eight Bills accompanying it. These Bills, however, were not submitted to the Barbadoes legislature by the Governor, Sir Henry Ward, who, apparently under some unaccountable feeling of alarm, withheld them, lest he should give offence to the Assembly. The Assembly, however, were evidently fully apprized of their tenor, and with that knowledge, a new consolidated slave law was passed by them in October, 1826, embracing all the reforms they thought it right to adopt. To this act the Governor has affixed his signature.

The first thing to be remarked in this new code is the omission of two clauses in that of 1825, which seemed to favour the slave.

* Papers presented by His Majesty's command, 1827, Part I. p. 197.

The Assembly probably thought that the concessions extracted from them by the alarm of the moment were too large, and that it became necessary therefore to retract them. Those clauses are the 4th, and the 64th; the first securing a right of appeal to the Governor for a writ of error in the case of capital convictions of slaves; the second providing that capital executions shall be *solemn* and by hanging *only*. These provisions, salutary as far as they went, are repealed by the present Act. The various horrors, therefore, which Mr. Dwarris so forcibly describes as attending the conviction and execution of slaves in Barbadoes, may, therefore, it is to be feared, be again in operation.

There is only one omission *in favour* of the slave. It is the 47th clause, which inflicted the punishment of death on slaves who should hear other slaves speak any words *tending* to mutiny or rebellion, without revealing them. There are also various slight modifications of particular clauses, which go to render them less revolting than they were before.

The only additions which are of much importance are the following :

1. The Governor, the Senior Member of Council, the Speaker of the Assembly, the Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and the Attorney General, are appointed a Committee of Protection for Slaves, “for the full and effectual securing to slaves the rights and privileges afforded to them by this Act,” (an Act which in fact affords them scarcely any right or privilege;) and this Committee are empowered to appoint a Secretary, cognizant of law, with a salary of 400*l.* currency a-year, or 260*l.* sterling, who is to be the legal adviser and advocate of slaves, and to assist with his legal advice, and without fee or reward, all slaves accused of any heinous offences or felonies, or claiming to be free, or complaining of cruelty or injustice; and who is also to prosecute for the maim or murder of a slave. And this “Acting Protector of Slaves,” whose functions are limited to these points, is to report from time to time his proceedings to the Committee of Protection.

This provision cannot be considered as in any measure a substitute for the regulations of the Trinidad Order in Council respecting a Protector. It is little more than a substitution, in a more convenient form, for the third clause of the Act of 1825, which allowed to slaves the aid of a solicitor at the public expense. But then no means are provided for enforcing the due performance of the duties of this officer; nor is any penalty attached to his neglect of them. We may therefore assume how inadequately they will be performed, for a population of 80,000

slaves, by a legal practitioner, probably in high practice, whose only remuneration amounts to 400*l.* currency a-year.

2. It is enacted, that the evidence of slaves shall be admitted in all cases of civil action for trespass or assault; and in all cases of misdemeanour, felony, murder, or any other offence, except forgery; *provided* they shall produce a certificate of baptism from the resident clergyman of the parish, and also a clergyman's certificate of competent religious knowledge; and provided too, in every case, the owner of the slaves, or any other persons, may be summoned and examined as to their character; and provided further, that *no white or free person shall be convicted on the testimony of slaves unsupported by other evidence.* The testimony of slaves may, however, be taken against any person of free condition, who shall be proved to have associated with them in cock-fighting, gambling, getting drunk, or in any crime.

3. Owners of diseased slaves, suffering them to go at large, *to infest the highways*, are to forfeit £10, for each offence.

4. Owners depriving slaves of personal property, *honestly acquired*, shall forfeit double the value; but they may (not impound but) *destroy* any hogs, sheep, goats, or poultry belonging to slaves trespassing on the plantations.

5. By the former law, all runaways, not claimed, were to be sold for slaves at the end of a year. By this, if a person committed as a runaway claims to be free, the marshal is to advertise for proof, and, if at the end of three months, none is produced, the Governor and Council shall examine the matter, and unless it is proved that the person claiming to be free, is *bona fide* a slave, he shall be set at liberty as free; but if not a native of the Island he may be forthwith deported. This is doubtless an improvement.

6. A tread-mill is to be erected, and to be used in certain cases as a commutation for other modes of punishment.

7. In cases of cruelty, to which only £25 currency had been attached as a penalty, it is now made not less than £25 nor more than £100 currency.

8. The only remaining changes consist in a few new penal inflictions on the slave. He is to be flogged, if he conceals a slave guilty of any offence, or sends him off the island; or if he tempts a slave to leave his master's service. It is also provided, that if a slave, possessed of personal property, shall be convicted of a theft, his property may be taken to defray the expenses of prosecution, and to indemnify the party injured.

Besides this principal Act, there is a supplemental one passed on the same day, entitled “an Act for encouraging the baptisms and marriages of slaves, and for the due observance of the Lord’s Day,” and which enacts, though without any sanctions or penalties, that “owners” (borrowing the ineffective language of the legislature of Jamaica for 130 successive years,) “shall, as much as in them lies, endeavour to instruct their slaves in the principles of the Christian religion,” and shall cause to be baptized, by a clergyman of the established church, all slaves hereafter to be born, and all, already born, “who shall be made sensible of the duties of the Christian faith;” and *permitting* “any clergyman of the established church” to solemnize the marriage of any slaves, “being the property of the same owner,” “producing the consent, in writing, of the owner,”—it being provided that such marriage shall confer on slaves no rights inconsistent with the rights of their owners. Of such baptisms and marriages so solemnized, a register is to be kept.—By the same Act, all Sunday markets are declared unlawful, on pain of forfeiture of the goods exposed to sale, and of a fine of £5 to free persons, and of a whipping to slaves. Every recognition of the sacredness of the Sabbath is to be hailed with satisfaction; and yet, while no other day is appointed, or given to the slave, for marketing, the measure obviously becomes one of severity and oppression to the slave, who is to be flogged if he comes to market on a Sunday, and who has, nevertheless, no other time allowed him for that purpose.*—Inducing or compelling Sunday labour is also forbidden, with certain exceptions.

A Bill for abolishing the tax on manumission, and for giving to persons who have been heretofore manumitted without paying that tax, the right, of which they had been debarred by an Act passed in 1817, of giving testimony in Courts of Justice, has not passed into a law, the Governor having refused his sanction on account of some informality. †

With these various modifications the Slave law of Barbadoes remains

* Sir Henry Warde seems almost to think (p. 204.) that it is some reparation for this act of injustice that Dr. Maycock had made a speech at a public meeting, in which he expressed a hope that time would be given to the slave, in lieu of Sunday, by the considerate humanity of the masters. And yet, in expressing that hope, Dr. Maycock admits, that had it been required to give other time in lieu of Sunday, as a condition of abolishing the Sunday market, it would have still continued to disgrace the island.

† Papers presented by Comand, 1827. Part I, p. 201.

in nearly the same state in which it was left by the Act of 1825 ; and if any one wishes to see what are the severities of that Act, he has only to turn to the publication already referred to, “The Slave Colonies of Great Britain,” p. 11 to 19.

The Assembly have attempted to vindicate their conduct in having thus disappointed the wishes of his Majesty’s Government, and of the nation.*

1. “The safety of the inhabitants, the interest of their property, and the welfare of the slaves themselves,” have prevented their yielding “to Earl Bathurst’s recommendations to prohibit the punishment of women by flogging, and the use of the whip in the field. To forbid, by legislative enactment, the flogging of female slaves, would, in the judgment of the Assembly, be productive of the most injurious consequences;” especially in the case of owners possessed of only one or two female slaves, domestics.

2. “Considerations no less powerful prevailed respecting the disuse of the whip in the field.” The power of summary punishment by flogging, “the Assembly considers to be inseparable from a state of slavery.”

3. The recording of punishment by whipping, limited to a given number of stripes, they think unadvisable ; because, in the hands of a relentless executioner, a small number of stripes might be so inflicted as to amount to cruelty ; and the ends of humanity are best consulted by leaving it to the justices to decide whether a punishment, whatever be its mode or quantity, be cruel.†

4. “Compulsory manumission is such a direct invasion of the right of property,” that the Assembly felt they could not, without “violating the sacred trust reposed in them, contemplate a measure absolutely destructive of that right, by investing slaves with the power, at their own will, and against the will of their owners, of purchasing their freedom.”‡

5. The Assembly, though they have not established Savings’ Banks, yet have, “in the spirit of true sincerity, provided for slaves the full security and enjoyment of their property.”||

6. They excuse their not taking any new measures to prevent the

* Papers presented by Command, p. 271—274.

† Surely the tender mercies of these legislators are cruel.

‡ See in reply to the whole of this argument, the Reporter, No. 27, *passim*.

|| There is no such provision in the Act. The Council framed a clause to that effect, but it was rejected by the Assembly.

separation of families by judicial sale, by alleging that a law to that effect was passed in 1688. The law, however, has been absolutely a dead letter, witness, among many facts of recent occurrence, the transaction inserted in the margin, and taken from the Parliamentary papers of 1826, No. 353. §

§ On the 7th of August, 1823, nineteen individuals became escheats of the Crown; and in eleven days from that time, namely, on the 18th of August, 1823, they were all sold by public auction, with the exception of two who effected their escape, and the net proceeds of their sale were paid into the Treasury of Great Britain. The transaction, bad enough in itself, is in no small degree aggravated, when we consider all the circumstances of it, and especially the cruel separation of families which was sanctioned by the agents of the Crown. The following are the particulars of this opprobrious sale, as they are given under the official signature of "Lionel Parke, Receiver General of his Majesty's Casual Revenue."

1. Quow, aged 55, father of Cæsar, sold to Thomas Louis, for £45.
 2. Cæsar, aged 27, son of Quow, to Samuel Henery, for £90.
 3. Orange, aged 67, mother of October, to B. T. Young, for £5.
 4. October, aged 44, son of Orange, to C. Crouch, for £46.
 5. Abel, aged 49, husband of Lubbah, and father of Thomas, Kitty, and Becky, sold to Henry Tudor, for £32. 10s.
 6. Lubbah, aged 40, wife of Abel, and mother of his children, sold also to Henry Tudor, for £38. She appears to have been put up separately, and Mr. Tudor appears to have bid high in order to obtain her.
 7. Thomas, aged 16, son of Abel and Lubbah, sold to H. Mozely, for £51.
 8. Kitty, aged 13, daughter of Abel and Lubbah, to Joshua Levi, for £46. 10s.
 9. Becky, aged 6, daughter of Abel and Lubbah, to Mr. Alsup, for £28.
- Again, Deborah, Sukey, Betsey, Polly, and Thomas, are brothers and sisters. Sukey has one child, Betsey three, and Polly one. They are thus disposed of,
10. Deborah, aged 28, is sold to W. Straker, for £15.
 11. Sukey, aged 26, mother of James William, { are sold, in one lot, to
 12. James William, aged 1½, son of Sukey, { Thos. Howell, for £51.
 13. Betsey, aged 34, mother of Caroline, Grace, and Medorah, } are sold, in one lot, to
 14. Caroline, aged 4, daughter of Betsey, . . . } James Lealted, for £50.
 15. Grace, aged 2½, daughter of Betsey, . . . }
 16. Medorah, aged 9, daughter of Betsey, is sold to William Austin, for £51. 10s.
 17. Thomas, aged 15, brother of Deborah, Sukey, &c. is sold to John Straker, for £52. 10s.

The fate of the remaining two is the only part of the detail which is at all satisfactory.

18. Polly, aged 39, mother of Richard, } absconded, and cannot
19. Richard, aged 11, son of Polly, } be found.

The price at which these persons were sold is stated in Barbadoes currency, and amounts to £602, or about £401, sterling. How much of this money, after

7. They also claim credit for the miserable and inefficient substitution of their “acting protector,” for the system of protection proposed by Lord Bathurst.

8. And they boast of their provisions respecting the testimony of slaves (see above) as going beyond those of his Lordship.

The Speaker of the Assembly concludes his labours with lauding “the honest and conscientious feeling” of its members, which had led them “to go the utmost lengths that prudence would allow, in giving effect to the wishes of his Majesty’s Ministers, to whom they now look with confidence, that the time they have so anxiously passed in maturing the measure, will, through their advice, receive the high reward which his Majesty’s most gracious confirmation of the Bill would confer.” p. 274.

And yet the very next proceeding of this Assembly is to reject a Bill sent to them from the Council for abolishing the whip in the field, and the flogging of females; and for conferring on slaves a right of property.

IV. BERBICE.

A new slave code, on the general model of the order in council for Trinidad, though departing from it in some respects, has been in operation in Berbice since the 1st of November, 1826.*

Besides the defects which are common to this law and that of Trinidad, as they are specified above, p. 79, there are in the former the following material variations from the latter.

1. The Trinidad Order requires that the Protector should be empowered to act for and defend the slave in all suits, *criminal* as well as *civil*. The Berbice Order confines his interference to *civil* cases, and gives to the court of criminal justice the power of appointing and paying an advocate, for the slave, in each special case of criminal charge.

2. In Berbice, even on Sunday, the slaves cannot leave the estates

passing through the hands of Escheators, Receivers, Marshals, Counsel, Attorneys, &c. came into the Royal Treasury of Great Britain, we should be curious to know. It is the price of blood, and we trust will not rest there without inquisition. What is it but a Slave Trade, more disgraceful than even that of Africa, by which the king of Great Britain has been made to enrich himself by the sale into perpetual slavery of seventeen of his liege subjects, whose dearest ties have been burst asunder by the process?

* See Papers presented by Command, 1827. Part ii. p. 189—229.

without leave, and are made subject in that respect to "such regulations as are established by law." But what are those regulations, and why do they not appear in this new code which ought to comprehend all the laws to guide the conduct of master and slave? It may be that regulations may exist which, not being specified, but having the force of law, may go far to defeat the provisions of the code. It is obvious that the slaves on an estate may, by a refusal of leave to quit the estate on Sunday, be shut out from all religious worship and instruction. This case at least should be excepted from restraint, as at the Cape of Good Hope. (See below, p. 28.)

3. Masters are permitted to occupy the morning hours of the Sunday, until eight o'clock, in distributing their allowances to the slaves. The three best hours of the day are thus unjustly taken from the slave and given to his master, while the day itself is desecrated by this unnecessary secular employment.

4. The Sunday markets (which ought clearly not to exist at all in any colony) are prolonged in Berbice to eleven o'clock, being an hour later than in Trinidad.

5. The clause forbidding the use of the driving-whip, in the field, is greatly wanting in precision as compared with the Trinidad Order. Its framers seem anxious to hurry over this tender ground.

6. The interval between the commission of a crime and its punishment is shortened in Berbice; and six slaves are admitted as witnesses of the infliction, instead of the presence of a free person being absolutely required as in Trinidad.

7. With respect to the *record* of punishments, the Berbice Order does not confine it to plantations, but extends it to all persons having gangs of more than six slaves. There ought however to be no limitation. Either the magistrate alone should punish; or the master should be obliged to record and report the punishments he inflicts.

8. That most important clause of the Trinidad Order, the 21st, obliging the owner to prove that fresh traces of laceration in his slave have not been unlawfully inflicted by him is entirely omitted. It forms a part of the Cape of Good Hope Order.

9. Marriages are confined in Berbice to slaves belonging to the same owner. In Trinidad there is no such limitation, nor at the Cape.

10. The time of *field* work is confined between the hours of six in the

morning, and six in the evening, with an interval of two hours. In Trinidad the law fixes no limit. But neither in Trinidad nor in Berbice is any limit placed on any other than *field* work; on such, for example, as carrying fodder for the cattle, after *field* labour is over, which is one of the most galling aggravations of the harsh lot of the field slave; or on the wearing and exhausting night labours of crop. It is a mockery to frame a limitation of this nature in terms so ambiguous as to open the door to the worst oppressions, without any direct breach of the law.

11. A regulation is introduced to secure the non-separation of families by judicial sale, which is of great importance and ought to be universally adopted; namely the keeping, on each estate, of an accurate and complete record of married persons or reputedly married persons and their children, a copy of it to be transmitted to the office of the Protector, and there registered with a view to facilitate investigation.

12. A most unwarrantable power is given to owners of plantations to *destroy*, in case of their non-removal from the estate on the owner's requisition, the live stock of slaves; just as if it were too much for the owner to cause them to be sold, for the benefit of the slave, rather than wantonly destroyed.

13. In the case of what is called *compulsory manumission*, the appraisers, appointed to value the slave, are absurdly made to swear not only that they will make a fair and impartial appraisement of the slave, with a reference to his strength, acquirements, &c., but with a reference also "to the absolute value of such slave to his owner, and the loss which such owner would sustain by the loss of the services of such slave;" just as if the market price were not the true and only criterion of a slave's value. This, however, is a mere trifle compared with the iniquity of a subsequent clause, which provides that *no slave shall be allowed to purchase his freedom without the consent of his owner, unless he can prove that the money for the purpose has been honestly acquired, either by his own earnings, or by bequest or succession; and that he has conducted himself honestly and faithfully for the five preceding years; and that he shall not have been convicted of any crime, or punished by any court or magistrate, for seven years preceding.*—It is quite impossible that the Government and Parliament of England can tolerate such a monstrous enactment,

which goes to nullify their own recorded purposes, and which would put it out of the power of an angel, in a state of slavery, to avoid incurring the fatal disqualification of the Berbice code. Suppose a man had been treasuring up his earnings for many years, adding to it any little gifts he might have received, the *gifts* would vitiate the whole mass and doom him to perpetual slavery. He must bring nothing to aid the purchase which has not been obtained by *bequest* or *succession*, or by his own *honest* industry. And what is the legal definition of “honest industry,” or of “honest and faithful conduct,” any failure in which is to be followed by such tremendous consequences? The man is to be retained in slavery, not because he has committed some specific criminal or fraudulent acts, which disqualify him for the possession of freedom, but because he cannot *sufficiently prove* that his conduct has been *honest* and *faithful*, (that he has never told a lie, or broke and sucked one of his master’s sugar canes!) during five years, and that his accumulated earnings, of perhaps 20 or 30 years, have not been tainted with fraud, or contaminated by a gift!

The new code was read to the slaves on the several estates in Berbice, and explained to them by the magistrates of districts, before it came into operation. The colony, the Governor assures us, was perfectly tranquil, “and the new code appeared, every where, to have produced the most beneficial effects.” p. 222. The testimony of the different civil magistrates is, generally speaking, to the same effect.

The Protector has fixed the wages to be paid to slaves, labouring on Sundays for the preservation of the crops, at a guilder, or about 17½d, sterling, for a day, estimated at ten hours of labour, and in the same proportion for a shorter or longer period.

In three weeks from the first day of the operation of this code, which was on the 1st of November, 1826, 500 guilders had already been deposited in the Saving’s bank by a few slaves.

V. BERMUDA.

There is no return whatever from this Colony.

VI. CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

An Ordinance resembling very closely that of Trinidad, was promulgated at the Cape of Good Hope, in June, 1826. It will be only necessary to notice its deviations from the Trinidad model.

1. Sunday markets are declared to be absolutely abolished, prohibited and unlawful; and yet, strange to say, the sale of vegetables, meat, and other articles of provision, is permitted on that day except during Divine service. This is building up with one hand and pulling down with another.—A part of the enactment, and one which it would be well were it imitated in every colony is, “that no slave shall be deprived by their masters of the right of attending at church, or other place of religious worship, on Sundays, under a penalty of 20s. for each offence, unless justifiable cause can be shown.”—But here again, no time in lieu of Sunday is given to the slave.

2. The time of labour, not of *field* labour merely, as in the West Indies, but of labour generally, is fixed at not more than ten hours, from the 1st of April to the 30th of September, nor more than twelve from the 1st of October to the 31st of March, except during seasons of extraordinary pressure, when a fair remuneration must be made the slave for extra labour.

3. The flogging of adult females may still be practised *privately*.

4. Corporal punishment must be inflicted, except in some special cases, by the hand of the owner, employer, or overseer himself.

5. In Trinidad sixteen years of age is the limit under which children are not to be sold separate from their parents. But at the Cape the limit is only ten years, and even under that age they may be separated by sale, if it can be *shewn that it is for the wellbeing of the children to be so sold*.

6. Slave owners are required, but not under any penalty, not only to have their slave children baptized but to send them to school.

7. The property of slaves, dying intestate, is to go to a fund for redeeming female slave children by fair appraisement.

8. No slave is to be rejected as a witness, by reason of slavery, if sufficiently instructed to understand the nature of an oath, except only in civil suits in which his owner is concerned.—This is by far the most liberal provision yet made in any slave colony on this subject.

VII. DEMERARA.

Such copious details respecting the Demerara Slave Code may be found in “The Slave Colonies of Great Britain,” p. 21 to 33; in the 11th Number of the Anti-Slavery Reporter, p. 145 to 151, and in the 27th

Number of the same work, that little need now be said upon it. The papers recently laid before Parliament contain little more than prolonged discussions of the Court of Policy on the same points of objection, particularly that of manumission, which are treated of in the above-mentioned publications, and in the last of them at considerable length. In those discussions Mr. President Wray, well known for the part he bore in the trial of the Missionary Smith, takes a prominent but not a very useful share. Professing, for example, to be a friend to the principle of manumission as proposed by the Government, he contrives, with great adroitness, to propose modifications of it, which, if adopted, would effectually destroy its efficacy.* With him, indeed, appear to have originated those monstrous provisions respecting manumission adopted into the Berbice Code, on which we have already remarked, and which make the manumission clause in that Code almost a nullity. They are, in fact, little more than a transcript from his speeches, which, it must be acknowledged, display much ingenuity in embarrassing a plain question, and in frustrating the very principle he professes to advocate.

The Court of Policy persist in refusing to pay the slaves for their Sunday labour in potting sugar, and drying cotton and coffee; or to permit them to hold property in land;† and they re-assert their opinion that the principle of manumission against the will of the master is a direct violation of the sacred right of property.‡ But this point can require no farther discussion, after what it has already received: it is now in issue before his Majesty's Government, the Parliament, and the country.

VIII. DOMINICA.

The usual circular communications were sent to the Governor of Dominica by Earl Bathurst, but were not brought before the Assembly until the 13th of February, 1827. The eight Bills were then proposed, but were all rejected. The Assembly expressed an intention to bring in a law of their own for further meliorating the condition of the slaves, but it was postponed, on the pretence of waiting till they knew whether

* Papers, &c. of 1827, Part ii. p. 171 and 183.

† Ibid. p. 173, 174.

‡ Ibid. p. 186.

the Acts they had already passed would be confirmed by his Majesty. "After all," says the Governor, General Nicolay, "I must confess that, although several of the amendments recommended might very likely be acceded to, I much doubt whether the Assembly will, *in any shape*, effectually embody in their laws, a provision for the appointment of a Protector and Guardian of slaves; *a measure of primary importance, and on which many of the other suggested improvements depend.*"*

The Assembly have not been left long in doubt as to the fate of their former Bills, for in a despatch which bears date the 3rd of April, 1827, Lord Bathurst informs the Governor that "*His Majesty is graciously pleased to acknowledge with commendation the disposition which the legislature of Dominica have manifested in many of the provisions of these acts to improve the condition of the slave population; and considering that they are in general framed in such a manner as to promote the well-being of that class of society, his Majesty has, with the advice of his Privy Council, been pleased to confirm them.*" "His Majesty's Government will, however, anxiously expect a revision of these Acts, with a view to the remedy of the various defects and omissions which I have pointed out."†

The Acts spoken of, are an Act of November, 1825, for abolishing all fees and taxes on manumission, to which, of course, no objection could be made; and "an Act for the further encouragement, protection, and better government of slaves, and for the general amelioration of their condition," passed in January, 1826. It is only on this last Act that it will be necessary to make any observations.

Lord Bathurst himself states the following long list of defects in this very Act which, with a strong expression of commendation, he had advised his Majesty to confirm.

1. It is silent on the important subject of Marriage.‡

* Papers, &c. 1827, Part ii. p. 5. The importance of the measure sufficiently accounts for the universal and vehement opposition it meets with in the colonies.

† Ibid. p. 8.

‡ And this is the more remarkable, because in the preceding Acts of Dominica, annulled by this Act, provisions for the marriage of slaves, and for punishing the violation of their marriage bed, used to hold a conspicuous place, although, as might be expected, they were uniformly a dead letter.

2. It is silent on the important subject of a Protector of Slaves.
3. Sunday Markets are there contemplated as permanent.
4. Compulsory labour, on the Sunday, seems to be allowed.
5. The use of the whip in the field, is not only not prohibited, but indirectly sanctioned.
6. The owner, &c. may still arbitrarily inflict thirty-nine lashes on any slave; and ten of these may be inflicted without any of the delay required in the case of a greater number.
7. The presence of a free witness at punishments is not required.
8. The flogging of females, instead of being prohibited, is expressly allowed.
9. No limit is fixed to the severity of any punishment, except that of whipping.
10. No record of punishment is required to be kept.
11. A slave's exhibiting recent traces of illegal punishment is not made to raise any presumption of guilt against the owner or manager.
12. No penalty is attached to a slave, who inflicts on another slave, an illegal punishment.
13. However repeatedly persons may inflict illegal punishments, they are not liable to any forfeiture of their slaves, nor to any incapacity of holding them, on account of such conduct.
14. Even in cases of atrocious cruelty and mutilation, where a jury may order the slave to be taken from his master, he is not to be made free, but sold, and the offender is to receive his price.*
15. A slave is expressly authorized to punish his fellow slaves by whipping.
16. A slave may be condemned to work in chains by a *single* magistrate, if convicted before him, as he may be on the evidence of a fellow slave, of *habitual bad conduct*.
17. The rules for the non-separation of the same family, "are destitute of all sanctions for securing the observance of them."† The separation of husbands and wives, and of children from their father, and even from their mother after twelve years of age, is not forbidden.

* This also is the course pursued in almost all the other Colonies.

† The same may be predicated of ninety-nine out of one hundred, of all the meliorating laws, so called, enacted in the Slave Colonies. They are utterly destitute, as Mr. Burke well observed, of all executory principle.

18. The taking property from slaves is not made penal, unless it is taken *forcibly*; and the only property which it is penal even thus to take away, is such only as the slave may possess both *by law and custom*; but there being no positive law on the subject, of course no penalty can ever be enforced.

19. No provision is made for securing or recovering debts or bequests owing to slaves; nor, in short, is any remedy provided for any civil wrongs they may sustain either from their owners or others.

20. No provision is made for the manumission of slaves without the owner's consent, or in cases where the property in them is settled, tied up, or litigated.

21. As to the evidence of slaves, no registry is ordered to be kept of witnesses declared to be competent. The slave is not permitted to give evidence for or against his owner in any *criminal* case. The evidence of a *single* slave, even if supported by *free* evidence, is not received; the confirmation of it must come from a fellow slave.

22. Baptism is made indispensable to giving evidence; whereas, an unbaptized slave, understanding the nature of an oath, appears to be an unobjectionable witness.

23. The rejection of slaves' evidence, if not offered within twelve months after the offence, is a rule which may be productive of extreme injustice.

24. The rules as to food, clothing, &c. are not expressed in sufficiently precise and definite terms.

25. The Act appears to authorize the employing slaves fourteen hours and a half every day in crop, and eleven hours and a half daily at all other times; and this is in addition to many indispensable minor and domestic offices; so that it is difficult to understand how such exertion can be compatible with the health of the slaves.*

26. The Act confounds crimes of very different degrees of malignity, —burglary, for instance, with breaking into *any* house, and robbing therefrom.

* Lord Bathurst's statement of the case is below the truth. The prescribed hours of field labour in the Dominica and Jamaica Acts, are from five in the morning to seven in the evening, all the year round, with an interval of half an hour for breakfast, and two hours at noon. Besides this, there is the collecting of grass for cattle when the field work is over. After which, their own minor and domestic occupations are to be attended to. And during crop, half the night must be added to this enormous sum and continuity of labour. Well may the negro race decrease!

27. The *attempt* to commit a crime is often punished, in this Act, with the same severity as if the crime had been committed.

28. The amount and nature of punishment is generally not fixed, but left to the discretion of the Court.

29. Some terms are used to describe capital crimes which have no fixed meaning, as “mutiny,” “mutinous,” “ringleaders,” &c.

30. Whenever a slave is executed, an indemnity is provided for the owner by the public; a regulation, in many cases, unjust, in many more inexpedient.*

31. The Act denounces heavy punishments, in language most obscure and indefinite, on *the use of certain words*. But banishment, unlimited fine and imprisonment, at the discretion of the Court, do not appear appropriate punishments for any words not treasonable or seditious.

Now, these thirty-one distinct and heavy heads of charge are brought against this Act by Lord Bathurst himself.† No one who reads them can fail to wonder at the commendation bestowed upon it by his Lordship, and will look in vain for those provisions which entitled it to His Majesty’s approbation, as manifesting “the disposition of the legislature” to “improve the condition of the slave population,” and as being so framed “as to promote the well-being of that class of society.” In truth, the Act contains, in the whole, only forty-one clauses, to almost every one of which, that does not respect mere matter of form, his Lordship has preferred the most vital and fundamental objections. And yet he confirms the Act with marks of the royal favour. It will certainly require some explanation to satisfy any common understanding that the name of His Majesty has not been unadvisedly employed, in this instance. And to refer again to the statement in his Lordship’s Circular, there surely would have been no impracticability, nor even any difficulty, to have framed in Downing-street an Act which should have less flagrantly violated every principle of justice than this latest edition of the consolidated slave law of Dominica, which His Majesty’s name has been put forward to confirm, and to put in operation.

* This most unjust principle of colonial law is to be found in all the colonial slave codes; but it appears to have hitherto escaped the vigilance of the colonial department.

† Papers, &c. 1827, Part ii. p. 6—8.

It is to be apprehended that the Assembly of Dominica have completely imposed on Lord Bathurst by the plausibility of their pretensions. They have long signalized themselves by a sort of legislative legerdemain. In 1788, they outdid all the other assemblies in their pretended measures of reform. But in 1804, sixteen years after, when Lord Camden required General Provost, then Governor of Dominica, to inform him what had been done in consequence of the meliorating law of 1788, the honest soldier bluntly answered that it had not at all been carried into effect. Nay, the Act itself, he said, “appears to have been considered, from the day it was passed until this hour, as a *political* measure to avert the interference of the mother country in the management of slaves.” (House of Commons papers of 1805, No. 39, pages 34 and 36.)

But though the Act of 1788 was, to all intents and purposes, a dead letter, it was thought unsafe to retain it. It was accordingly repealed, with all its fair sounding provisions, by a new slave Act passed in 1821, into which a summary, and most unobtrusive clause was introduced, (the 35th,) repealing the whole without a single word of preamble or remark, of reservation or exception. And yet, when the House of Commons, in 1825, called upon the Dominica authorities to state what were the laws of that island by which “the marriage of slaves is authorized and sanctioned, and their connubial rights recognized and secured,” they had the effrontery to produce the repealed law of 1788 on the subject, confiding in the prevailing ignorance on this side of the Atlantic;—thus taking credit to themselves for provisions, which, while they existed, were a dead letter, and which they themselves had deliberately annulled five years before.* This, however, is only one of the many attempts which are daily made to blind the eyes of the parliament and people of England with respect to colonial matters.

IX. GRENADA.

In the Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. 11. p. 155 to 162, will be found a full account of the defective, or more properly speaking, the opprobrious nature of the new slave law of Grenada, passed in May, 1825, and also of the strange arguments by which the acting Governor, Mr.

* See Papers ordered to be printed by the House of Commons, 9th May, 1826, No. 353; and Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. 19, p. 266, 267.

Paterson, endeavoured to vindicate its provisions. Of this Act, however, as of that of Dominica, already referred to, Lord Bathurst informs the Governor, that "the many beneficial provisions, have entitled it to His Majesty's approbation." He hoped, doubtless, that this flattering commendation would dispose them to receive with more deference and courtesy the eight Bills he had sent them. But the gentlemen of Grenada seem quite as inaccessible to the voice of flattery, as they are to the claims of justice and humanity, in what respects the law of slavery. In the month of September, 1826, the eight Bills were submitted to the Assembly, and leave being asked to bring them in, they were, one and all, rejected by considerable majorities.

The praise of His Majesty's Government is too easily obtainable, if it may be earned by such miserably ineffective and evasive provisions, as form the latest edition of the Slave Code of Grenada. To lavish praise on such a performance, is to confound the distinctions of right and wrong, of justice and injustice. And it is a grievous disappointment of the just expectations of Parliament and the public, when colonial legislatures receive gracious acknowledgments from His Majesty, while pursuing a conduct which is directly opposed to the reiterated recommendations of the Crown itself, to the recorded resolutions of Parliament, and to the universal prayer of the British nation.

X. HONDURAS.

There is no report from this Colony.

XI. JAMAICA.

The Assembly of Jamaica rejected, without any reserve, the whole of the eight Bills transmitted to them by Lord Bathurst. They profess, however, to have adopted into a new consolidated slave law* all that was essential in these bills in the way of reform. It will now be seen how that professed purpose has been carried into effect.

1. No Protector of slaves has been appointed, but the Justices and Vestry of each parish, (in other words, the owners and managers against whom it is the object of the office to protect the slaves) are, in the terms of the Act of 1816, appointed a council of protection. (Clause 34.) This is like constituting the wolf the guardian of the fold.

* Papers, &c. for 1827, Part i. p. 69—102.

2. Slave evidence is admitted in certain *criminal* cases, *provided* the slave produce a certificate of baptism, and the magistrate or court is satisfied of his knowledge of an oath, and of his competency and credibility. But no free person shall be convicted on slave testimony, unless two slaves, examined apart, testify to the same circumstances; and unless the complaint be made within twelve months of the commission of the crime; and in no case of conviction, on slave testimony, for cruelty, shall the Court be at liberty to declare any slave free. (Clauses 130—135.)

3. No right is given to slaves to purchase their freedom, except with the owner's consent; but when the owner is consenting, facilities are afforded for effecting the manumission, notwithstanding incumbrances or disputed claims. (Clauses 67—76.)

4. No legal validity or effect is given to the marriage of slaves; only *clergymen* are *permitted* (but without any fee) to celebrate the marriage of slaves *who have been baptized, and who present a written permission from their owner*, provided the clergyman shall be satisfied, on examination, that they have an adequate knowledge of the obligations of the marriage contract; (Clause 4;) but no record of such marriages is ordered.

5. Sunday markets are to cease at eleven o'clock. Slaves are protected from being levied upon on Saturday, but that day is not given to them. Slaves are not to be hired on Sunday without the owner's consent. Sugar mills, as by the old law, are not to work between seven o'clock on Saturday night and five on Monday morning. (Clauses 6—10.)

6. No right of property is conferred on the slave, although it is declared, (Clause 16) that it is expedient to do so; (the declaration of the expediency of a law to that effect being substituted for the law itself.) The only *enactment* on the subject is, that, if any one deprives a slave of property *lawfully possessed by him*, (and how can any property be lawfully possessed by him to whom the law gives no right of property?) he shall forfeit £10, over and above the value of the property taken, (thus commuting an act of robbery into a mere civil trespass, which no means are afforded the slave of obtaining a remedy for, as he cannot sue for the penalty.) An executor *may* pay to a slave a legacy left to him, but the slave is expressly debarred from any action at law or equity for the same. (Clause 17.) Indeed no means

of civil suit are allowed him in any case. What then becomes of his alleged right of property?—No Savings' Banks are instituted.

7. That when families are taken together in execution, they shall be sold together, is no new law, but the old law of the island. (Clause 5.) It is unnecessary to shew that this is no guarantee whatever against the separation of families by judicial sale.

8. Neither the driving whip, nor the flogging of females, is abolished; nor is any record of punishments required. *Workhouse* punishments, unauthorized by a magistrate, are limited to ten days' confinement, and twenty lashes. Every driver may still inflict ten lashes, and every owner or overseer thirty-nine lashes at his discretion, on any slave, of any sex or age, without specification of offence, or legal responsibility of any kind. Branding a slave is now made punishable. (Clauses 34—38.)

It is obvious from this statement that not one of Lord Bathurst's propositions has been adopted by the Jamaica legislature. In fact, on comparing this new Act with the Act of 1816, it will be found, that with the exception of the few changes already noted, there has been no substantial improvement of the legal condition of the slave, nor any substantial alleviation of the penal rigours of his state. The new Act consists of 139 clauses, 28 of which are occupied with the points which have been already adverted to, and upwards of 90 are either repetitions of the clauses of former Acts, with such slight alterations, as are chiefly verbal, or have respect merely to matters of form or legal process. Of the remaining clauses, four consist of improved regulations for the arraignment and trial of slaves; two respect the food and clothing of the slaves, and are merely revived clauses of former Acts that had been dropped because of their inefficiency; five are framed for the more effectual recovery and punishment of runaways; two are against the unlawful assembling and gambling of slaves; two provide for the better disposal of convicts condemned to labour; and one authorizes the parochial magistracy to employ either a barrister or attorney to attend the trial of slaves for capital offences, with a view to their defence.

In one of the clauses regulating the trial of slaves, (113) it is provided that the Governor's warrant shall be required for the execution of all capital sentences on slaves, except in the very case where such an interposition is most imperiously called for, namely, in cases of rebellion

or rebellious conspiracy, in which the warrant of the Justices is made sufficient, without any reference to the Governor.

One point still remains. The old and cruel law is now renewed (85) which enacts that “any slaves *found guilty of preaching or teaching as Anabaptists or OTHERWISE*, without a permission from their owner and the Quarter-Sessions,” shall be punished *at the discretion of any three magistrates, by whipping or hard labour in the workhouse.** To this disgraceful clause two new ones are now added. The 86th enacts, that “whereas the assembling of slaves and other persons after dark at places of meeting belonging to dissenters from the established religion, and other persons professing to be teachers of religion, has been found extremely dangerous; and great facilities are thereby given to the formation of plots and conspiracies;† and the health of slaves and other persons has been injured in travelling to and from such places at late hours in the night,”‡ “all such meetings between sunset and sunrise shall be held and deemed unlawful.”§ The penalty on the *sectarian* minister, acting contrary to this Act, is from £20 to £50, or a month’s confinement in gaol. This, however, is not to prevent any *licensed* minister from performing divine worship at any time before eight in the evening at any *licensed* place, or to interfere with the celebration of the rites of the Jewish and Catholic religions.||

The 87th clause is a still more outrageous infringement of the rights of conscience, and the principles of toleration. It is to this effect, “And whereas, under pretence of offerings and contributions, large

* What is this but bloody persecution? A negro is not to teach his fellow to fear God, or to turn from his sins to his Saviour, but at the risk of having his flesh torn by the cart-whip, or being subjected to hard labour in chains, *at the discretion* of the magistrates. Such is the benign spirit of the legislators of Jamaica towards a population, whom they have kept, for ages, in the darkness of heathenism!

† Nothing can be more untrue than the whole of the above preamble. It has not even a shred of evidence on which to rest.

‡ The health which suffers nothing from toiling in the field till night-fall, and then collecting and carrying fodder, and besides this, *working hard* half of every night during crop, is to be ruined by sitting for half an hour, or an hour, in a house or chapel, to receive religious instruction, or to join in religious worship!

§ The hours of field labour in Jamaica are fixed by law, from five in the morning to seven in the evening. How then can religious meetings be held, except during the proscribed hours, that is to say, between sunset and sunrise?

|| The reader will observe the superior favour and indulgence shewn to the Catholic and the Jew over the Protestant Christian.

sums of money and other chattels have been *extorted by designing men professing to be teachers of religion, practising on the ignorance and superstition of the negroes in this Island, to their great loss and impoverishment* ; * and whereas, an ample provision is already made by the public and by private means for the religious instruction of the slaves." † Be it enacted that, "*it shall not be lawful for any dissenting minister, religious teacher, or other person whatsoever, to demand or receive any money or other chattel whatsoever, from any slave for affording such slave religious instruction, by way of offering, contribution, or on any other pretence whatsoever,*" under a *penalty, on conviction before three Justices, of £20 for each offence, half to be paid to the informer, who is hereby declared a competent witness,* ‡ or, in default of payment, imprisonment in the common gaol for not more than one month.

It might not be expedient to express all the indignation which such an atrocious enactment as this is calculated to excite. Nor is it necessary. Such an enactment no British minister would advise His Majesty to confirm. It must, as a matter of course, be disallowed.

The above review of the proceedings of the Jamaica legislature, unavoidably leads the mind to the consideration of a petition which the Assembly of that island addressed to His Majesty in their last Session, and which has been blazoned in every newspaper in the kingdom, as a conclusive vindication of their conduct, and a triumphant refutation of every adverse statement. It cannot be denied that if the statements of that petition be true, the view now given of the nature and tendency of the recent legislation of Jamaica must be false.

* This heavy charge has an evident reference to the Methodist and Baptist Missionaries in the island of Jamaica, and it is incumbent on them to repel the calumny, and to vindicate the labour of love in which they are engaged, and the means they employ to promote it, from such false and foul aspersions.

† This assertion must have been known to be utterly untrue. It is proved to be so by the Bishop's report of last year, wherein he states, that for a population of 400,000, which Jamaica contains, there are places of worship only for 11,500 ; and "*that the parishes in the interior are absolutely without the semblance of the forms of religious worship.*"

‡ This must mean that slaves, who are excluded from giving testimony in all other civil suits, shall be admitted as informers and witnesses against a Missionary, if he shall dare to permit a slave to contribute to the expense of his own instruction, or of the chapel erected for his use, or to testify by a small contribution, his desire of communicating to others, still more wretched than himself, the light of the gospel with which he has been blessed.

It is not meant here to allude to the extravagant and rhodomontade delineations of the content and happiness in which Jamaica, "rich in the produce of her soil and the extent of her trade" once flourished; because, during the last sixty years, there have issued periodically from this Assembly, in the shape either of petitions, or reports, or addresses, the very same complaints which fill the present petition,—of dilapidated resources, decayed commerce, productions overburdened with imposts, universal gloom, inevitable ruin in its most dreadful forms, advancing with rapid strides,—and the English vocabulary ransacked for terms to depict the depth and intensity of their poverty and distress. This is the natural tone of the mendicant who thrives by the loudness of his wailings, combined with a certain air of sturdiness and menace which frightens the timid into granting the relief they fear might be extorted, if entreaty should prove fruitless.—The Assembly remind the King of the imposts paid on their produce, imposts, however, which they forget to tell him that the country, not they, have paid. They also forget to count up the sums which, in the shape of bounties and protecting duties, have been enabling the planters, for whom they are acting, to raise in this country splendid palaces, to maintain sumptuous establishments, and to purchase seats in Parliament, while these their agents in Jamaica are exacting from the whip-galled and wasting population, the sugar for which we are made to pay so dearly.

Then follows the usual vehement vituperation of Canning, and of the House of Commons, and of the erring philanthropists, and of the interested and designing calumniators, who have combined in a foul conspiracy to extinguish slavery, and thus to effect the ruin of the West Indians. All this may be passed over in silence. It must have lost its effect on the public mind. The threatened ruin so often declared to be impending, nay, to have actually arrived, can now no longer alarm. Even insurrections and conspiracies, so often got up and played off to serve a temporary purpose, have lost their terrors. They find it necessary to occupy new ground, and to plead not their *dangers*, but their *merits*, their merits too as zealous philanthropists, and liberal and enlightened legislators, from whose "humane and benevolent disposition," (such are the terms in which they extol themselves,) "enactments have emanated spontaneously," which have rendered "our slave code" "as perfect as circumstances will permit."—That their movements in the way of reform have been *spontaneous*, those who have watched the progress of

events, since the commencement of the slave-trade controversy in 1787, will feel to be about as true as that their slave code has now reached to the highest pitch of attainable perfection. But let us examine their claims on their own shewing.

1. "*The consolidated slave law passed in 1816,*" they affirm, "*received an unqualified approbation from many of your Majesty's Ministers, as containing many salutary and humane provisions.*"

If such praise were ever bestowed upon it by any but West Indians, it must have been bestowed in gross ignorance of its contents. Many of its provisions, instead of being salutary and humane, were most noxious and inhuman, and those which bore a contrary aspect were devoid of all sanction and of all efficiency; witness the clause which has stood on their statute book since 1696, requiring all owners, &c., to endeavour, as much as in them lies, the instruction of their slaves in Christianity; while they have continued to deny to them both the marriage tie, and the Christian sabbath, and have never dreamt of communicating to them the slightest particle of religious instruction, till driven to it by public clamour. Those who wish to appreciate the merits of that boasted code, may consult with advantage Stephens' *Delineation of the Law of West India Slavery*, and the Appendix E, to the published Debate on Slavery of the 15th of May, 1823. They will also find a luminous comment upon it, in a Letter of Lord Bathurst to the Governor of St. Vincent's, dated 3rd of April, 1827, (Papers of 1827, Part ii. p. 110—114,*) containing Observations on the Law of that Island, of 1825, which is an *improved* version of the law of Jamaica of 1816.

2. "*Since that period, the persons of females have been protected by legal enactments in conformity with the spirit of the Act of Elizabeth.*"

There is a very convenient ambiguity in this statement. The real meaning of it is, that female children, under ten, and female slaves generally, are now protected from *rape*, (clauses 32, 33,) there having been no law to that effect before 1823, and the Jamaica legislature having then been called upon by General Conran and Lord Bathurst to pass such a law. But let it not be supposed that the persons of females are protected either from indecent exposure or from the lacerations of the

* An abstract of this letter will be found under the head St. Vincent's, below.

cart-whip. On the contrary, they are still liable, equally with the men, to the same 39 lashes of that torturing instrument, inflicted on their bared bodies, at the bidding of any free ruffian in the island, who, as owner or overseer, may be in authority over them. (Clause 37.) The Assembly, when called upon in the last session, refused not only to exempt them from this savage infliction, but even to prohibit the exposure of their naked limbs during the process of punishment, the place on which it is inflicted being the most fleshy part of the thighs, which they are stretched prone on the earth in order to present more fully, uncovered, both to the gaze of the spectator, and to the incisions of the driver.

3. *“Sentence of death, by judicial authority, cannot be enforced without the sanction of the Governor.”*

Deception lurks even in so plain a statement; for if the Act, (clause 99,) is consulted, it will be found that that very case is exempted from any necessity of reference to the Governor, which, of all others, [most requires to be under his control, and where the inflamed passions of the planters are most likely to operate in causing unjust and precipitate executions, namely, “*the case of slaves convicted of rebellion and rebellious conspiracy,*” in which case it is enacted, that “the Court shall, and may proceed to pass sentence, and to carry the same into execution as heretofore,” provided only the occasion be not pressing, when the Court may, if it thinks proper, refer the matter to the Governor.

4. *“Manumissions have been encouraged and facilitated.”*

That has not been done, which can alone give due facilities to manumission, namely, compelling the master to accept a fair price for the liberty of his slave.

5. *“The slave has been exempt from the effect of legal process on Saturday, that he may dispose of the produce of his labour on that day, and devote his Sunday to religious worship.”*

The circumstance that the slave is exempt, on Saturday, from legal seizure for the debts of his master, enables the *master* to employ him off the estate on that day, without the risk of losing him. But it does not enable the slave to employ it either in going to market, or in cultivating his own provision grounds. The law saves the master from having his slave wrested from him on that day; but that this may be of any use whatever to the slave, he must not only be saved from legal process

for his master's debts on that day, but he must have the day allotted to him by law, which it is not. Without this appropriation of it, it is positively of little or no benefit to the slave; and therefore the measure, vaunted as it has been, is only a fresh attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the people of England.

6. "*Curates, throughout the several parishes of the island, have been appointed for the special purpose of instructing our slave population in the tenets of the Christian faith.*"

The Curates' Act was passed in 1816. In October, 1825, the Bishop reports to Lord Bathurst that "*the parishes in the interior are absolutely without the semblance of the forms of religious worship.*" The testimony of Mr. Stewart also, himself a West Indian, is, in this respect, equally decisive. The Curates' Act made the permission of the planters necessary to the instruction of their slaves. Probably from this cause,—but if not, yet, "*from whatever cause,*" says Mr. Stewart, writing in 1823, the Act "*has been rendered, in a great measure, abortive.*" Either the lukewarmness of the curates, or the unwillingness of the planters, has "*operated to render the intentions of the legislature nugatory.*" In truth, he adds, "*very few of the slaves have it in their power to attend Church,*" "*for Sunday is not a day of rest and relaxation to the plantation slave, he must work on that day or starve.*" (*Stewart's View of Jamaica*, p. 157.)

7. "*Fees on baptism and marriage have been abolished.*"

That is true.

8. "*The slave has been made capable of receiving bequests of personal property to any amount.*"

Yet the very clause (17) which authorizes an executor to pay a bequest to a slave, provides "*that nothing herein contained shall be deemed to authorize the institution of any action or suit at law or in equity, for the recovery of such legacy, or to make it necessary to make any slave a defendant to a suit in equity.*" In a colony where it is notoriously difficult to recover debts at all, and where executors are proverbially unfaithful, what chance has the poor slave, under such circumstances, of reaping any benefit from such an enactment? It is altogether a mockery.

9. "*In the present session we have expunged all those enactments which the policy of a remote period rendered imperative, but which, in the present day, are no longer called for, and appear harsh.*"

This is certainly a great misrepresentation. The only provision of the Act of 1816, which might appear harsh towards a slave, and which has been expunged from the Act of 1826, is that, in clauses 39 and 40, which prohibited any master, under a penalty of £30, from permitting a slave to possess either horse or mule. And even this concession was no spontaneous act on the part of the Assembly. Lord Bathurst had refused to sanction their deficiency Law, if this harsh restriction were retained.

The only other clauses of the Act of 1816, which have been expunged from that of 1826, are clauses not harsh, but favourable to the slave, namely the 9th, requiring, under a penalty of £50, an annual return, on oath, of the births and deaths of slaves on plantations; the 10th authorizing the owner to deduct the penalty of £50 from the Overseer's salary, if the neglect were his; the 11th giving a reward of £3, to be divided to mothers, midwives, and nurses, for every child born on a plantation; and the 73rd, which directed magistrates to commit runaways to workhouses only, and not to gaols.

Is not the statement of the Assembly, then, utterly untrue, which says, that "during the present session, they have expunged *all* those enactments" of former times, which appear harsh?

10. "*We have afforded still greater protection to the slave by imposing further restrictions on the mode of punishment.*"

Loudly called to it by the public voice at home, they have made it penal to *brand* a slave; but no other new restriction whatever has been imposed on the arbitrary power of punishment by the master, overseer, or driver. The power to *flog*, to *incarcerate in the stocks*, and to *drive in the field*, all men, women, and children, is just the same as under the former Act. The master, however, cannot now, as formerly, by his own authority, commit his slaves to *gaol* for more than ten days, or give them *there* more than twenty lashes.

It is true, there are some modifications of the trials and public punishments of slaves; that is to say, in a few cases two magistrates are now required to convict where one was before sufficient or three where only two were before necessary. In some cases the extreme severity of capital punishment is mitigated to transportation or hard labour for life; and in a few, the discretion formerly allowed, is somewhat limited.

11. "*They have extended to him, in common with every British subject, the benefit of a Grand Jury.*"

This is the first fruits of Mr. Denman's motion, in March, 1826, on the disgraceful trials which took place in Jamaica in 1823 and 1824. But this benefit of a Grand Jury is expressly limited to crimes which subject slaves to death, transportation, or confinement to hard labour for life, or for a longer period than a year.

12 *"An advantage has also been conferred, which no British subject in the United Kingdom enjoys, of having counsel assigned, with liberty to address the jury in behalf of the slave who may be put on his trial for any capital offence."*

The case is overstated. The magistrates in every parish "are empowered and required" (but without being liable to any penalty for not doing it) to employ either a barrister or attorney, at such rate of remuneration as they may see fit, to be paid by the parish, to attend the trial of all slaves for capital offences, and to take their defence. (Clause 102.)—But to say that this confers on the poor slave advantages which no British subject enjoys, is surely rather an extravagant position. It ought to be remarked, that in the West Indian courts all free criminals may have the benefit of counsel to plead for them.

13. *"The Sunday market has been abolished after the hour of eleven."*

This is no abolition of the Sunday market; on the contrary, it legalizes and sanctions it. (Clause 6.) The six best hours, nearly one-half of the sacred day, are consumed in the most secular and distracting of all employments, independently of travelling to the market and back, five, ten, fifteen, or twenty miles; to which, *by law*, are now superadded all the temptations to dissipation and debauchery, and to the neglect of religious worship, which Sunday markets must bring with them.

14. *"Marriage among our slaves has been encouraged."*

Never was any assertion less true than this. It is actually rather discouraged. The first recognition of such a thing among slaves as marriage, that fundamental institution of society, by the legislature of Jamaica, is in this Act of 1826; and even there, *no legal sanction is given to it*, no connubial rights are conferred by it. There is merely a permission to clergymen to perform the ceremony, in the case of slaves who have been baptized, and who, on examination, being found to understand the nature of the marriage contract, produce the written consent of their owner. No means are prescribed for preserving a record of such marriages; or for controlling the owner's refusal of his consent.

15. “ *The separation of families, under judicial or other process, has been prohibited.*”

What other process is here meant it is impossible to divine. The only provision on the subject is to be found in the fifth clause, and that refers exclusively to sales under levies by the marshal, or the collecting constable; no mention whatever being made of any other kind of sale. Now the Assembly actually rejected a clause proposed to them, to prohibit the separation of families by private sale. Besides, this is no new clause. It only renews what has long been the law, that when a family is seized together it shall be sold together. Nay, it is so far from effectually preventing separations, that it expressly bars against its being understood to interfere with levies *on individual slaves*. And in point of fact, the levies by the collecting constables are almost always on individual slaves, who, of course, are sold singly; and it often, nay generally happens, that even on the occasion of seizures by the marshal, it is not the whole family; but an individual or two of it, who are taken.

16. “ *The maintenance of infirm slaves has been enforced.*”

This is no new law, but the mere repetition, *totidem verbis*, of what has always stood in the statute book. The 19th clause of 1826 corresponds to the 13th of 1816.

17. “ *The acquisition of personal property has been sanctioned and secured by law.*”

The clause here alluded to, the 15th, gives neither sanction nor security to the property of slaves.—See above, p. 37.

18. “ *We have declared slaves competent to give evidence in criminal cases.*”

Slaves are not allowed to give evidence in any civil cases, and only in certain specified criminal cases, and even then under very material restrictions, which will be found above, p. 37.

Is it not a most indecorous proceeding, to use the mildest term which befits the occasion, in a body like the Assembly of Jamaica, to approach the throne with an official representation so full of misstatements, and in some instances so directly at variance with the truth, as many parts of this Petition? And while they have thus exaggerated and misrepresented what has actually been done, they have entirely omitted to notice what has been left undone. They have omitted to state their general rejection of the reforms recommended by

his Majesty. They have omitted also to mention the many harsh, not to say barbarous enactments, which have been retained on their statute book; such as the number of hours in the day assigned to the slaves for field labour, independently of night work, grass collecting, and other minor labours of their own; the power given to a single magistrate to punish at his discretion a slave complaining of his master, who does not prove his complaint; the sale into slavery of persons apprehended as runaways, who affirm they are free, but fail in proving their freedom, although claimed by no one; the punishment of slaves “offering any violence to or towards any white or free person,” with death, &c.; the punishment also with death of pretenders to witchcraft; the punishment of teaching or preaching with flogging, &c.; the debarring of slaves from contributing to any religious or charitable object; the punishment of slaves having less than 20lb. of meat of any kind in their possession with 39 lashes, and above 20lb. with any infliction short of death; the indemnifying of owners for the value of slaves executed or transported; the authorizing of the execution of slaves convicted of rebellion, or rebellious conspiracy, without any reference to the Governor; the prohibiting of any slave, however atrocious may be the cruelty with which he has been treated, from being set at liberty, if any slave shall have been a witness at the trial; with other enactments of the same kind.

XII. MAURITIUS.

There is no return whatever from this island. In the next session of parliament there will probably, however, be a full developement of the peculiarly cruel character of the slavery which exists there.

XIII. MONTSERRAT.

From this island, also, there is no return.

XIV. NEVIS.

About twenty folio pages are devoted to Nevis, which do not, however, furnish the slightest official information.* They contain some merely inchoate measures, which have not been in any instance carried into effect; and even these notices are furnished not through the regu-

* Papers, &c. 1827, Part ii. p. 73—92.

lar official channel of the Governor, but through the private and unofficial channel of the agent for Nevis, Mr. Colquhoun. But whatever may be the correctness of Mr. Colquhoun's information, it serves no purpose, except uselessly to fill up twenty folio pages of printing with an unfinished and abortive Bill.* We should have been sorry, indeed, had that of Nevis proved otherwise than abortive, as it went to legalize Sunday markets, the flogging of women, driving in the field, with many more of the well-known abominations of the slave system, and as it made no real and efficient improvement," even where it *seemed* to touch upon the reforms recommended by Lord Bathurst. The following ingenious method of complying with his Lordship's wish to abolish driving in the field, may be taken as a specimen of the legislative dexterity of the Nevis Assembly. "And be it further enacted, that it shall be henceforth utterly unlawful to carry, use, exercise, or employ the whip, commonly called the cart-whip, either as an emblem of authority, or as an instrument of punishment, or of driving or coercing of slaves to their labour, and the same is hereby abolished. BUT nothing herein contained shall extend, or be construed to extend, to prevent any master, or manager of slaves within this island, from permitting, or causing to be carried and exercised or employed, such emblem of authority, *and moderate and innoxious means of stimulating the idle or the lazy to due exertion, as he in his discretion may think fit, so as that such emblem of authority, or means of stimulating exertion, be not repugnant to the rational and acknowledged principles of humanity.*"

It were curious to inquire what those rational and acknowledged principles of humanity are, which are recognized in the colony which witnessed, and nevertheless refused to punish, the atrocities of a Huggins.

XV. ST. CHRISTOPHERS.

On the 7th of October 1826, Governor Maxwell informed Lord Bathurst that he had laid the bills recommended by his Lordship before the legislature, and that he feared the greatest objection would be felt to the appointment of a Protector of slaves. This, he adds, "I must regret, as I feel convinced that without some provision of this kind, the slaves will not have the protection and support to which their

* Ibid. p. 309.

forlorn situation so justly entitles them.”* The whole of the recommended measures, however, appear to have been as unpalatable to the Assembly of St. Kitt’s as that of a Protector. They have as yet adopted none of them. On the 5th of May, 1827, no progress whatever had been made.†

XVI. ST. LUCIA.

By referring to the pamphlet entitled the “Slave Colonies of Great Britain,” p. 73—76, it will be seen with what earnestness the Governors of St. Lucia, General Mainwaring, and Colonel Blackwall, making common cause with the planters, struggled to preserve entire some of the worst abominations of the slave system. Much has nevertheless been done since that time to improve the state of the law in this island, though it has not been without many opposing efforts; as if, in parting with one abuse after another, their very heartstrings had been torn asunder. And yet, on the 15th of August 1826, General Mainwaring writes that “since the promulgation of the slave law, now three months in operation, the greatest harmony and good feeling exist in the colony.”—Nay, “the happiness, quiet, and good order of the plantations have been fully proved to me by the reports of the Commandant, and of a commission,” who had made the tour of the island, and inspected every estate.‡ The General, however, can hardly forgive the abolitionists, for having interfered to produce this state of things, (taking it to be a real and not an imaginary picture,) for on having been forced reluctantly by Lord Bathurst to make a few material improvements in the code, which he had at first promulgated in a somewhat imperfect state, he tells his Lordship that the members of the council who have acceded to these improvements are slave holders; and he hopes, that having done so, they “will be met by a corresponding feeling on the part of the anti-colonists at home; when I trust the West India question will be set at rest in a manner which I hope will be satisfactory to your Lordship.”§

We fear that the gallant General, who has kindly volunteered this remark, may still have to experience some annoyance from

* Papers, &c. 1827, Part ii. p. 69. † Ibid. p. 309.

‡ Papers, &c. of 1827, Part ii. p. 139.

§ Papers, &c. 1827, Part ii. p. 157.

the troublesome interference of these *anti-colonists*, as he calls them, within the bounds of his government.

It is not a very easy matter to give a clear view of the present state of the law in St. Lucia, as the text of the new code is so broken into parts, and so overloaded with notes, and so interrupted with arguments and observations, as to bear to the cursory reader a very perplexed aspect. The original Ordinance has also been largely amended since its first promulgation, so that a revised and compacted edition of the whole is necessary before its real drift can be properly appreciated. Certainly great pains appear to have been bestowed upon it by Mr. Jeremie, the President of the Royal Court, who nevertheless shews a disposition to defer too readily to the unreasonable apprehensions of the planters around him.*

The following are the points in which the St. Lucia Ordinance now differs from that of Trinidad, and, for the most part, as will be seen, very greatly to the advantage of the former. The authorities for what follows will be found in the papers for 1826, p. 1 to 104, and in those for 1827, Part ii. p. 157 to 160.

1. The law with respect to the non-separation of families, by judicial sales, is more effectually guarded from violation than even in Trinidad. If the creditor shall seize one of a family, the owner shall be bound, on pain of forfeiting them, to produce the rest, that they may be sold in one lot. The prohibition to separate families extends also to sales by private and voluntary agreement. The transfer of part of the family shall be taken and considered as a transfer of the whole, and that without any increase of price being paid to the person who had unduly retained them.

* This gentleman occasionally gives way to prejudices which are unworthy of him. He accuses the abolitionists (going quite out of his way for the purpose) of contradicting themselves, and of distorting facts to serve their present object; but the instances he gives have really no foundation whatever in truth. Who, for example, among them has ever alleged as a reason for giving rights to the slaves, that they are "well informed," "absolutely learned,"—or as an excuse for the Demerara insurrection, "What could be expected from a benighted negro?" The abolitionists know too well the deplorable ignorance of the slaves ever to have asserted the extent of their learning. And with respect to the Demerara insurrection, their surprise certainly was that benighted negroes should have acted so well under such strong excitement, rather than that their conduct required a disparaging apology. This gentleman has, nevertheless, rendered most essential services to the interests of humanity.

2. Slaves cannot be separated by seizure and sale from the plantations to which they belong.

3. Sunday markets are continued till eleven in the forenoon.

4. The rules respecting labour, which at Lord Bathurst's suggestion have since been somewhat though very inadequately modified, shew clearly the intensity of the toil exacted from the slaves, and account, in some measure, for the extraordinary mortality which occurs in St. Lucia. "Masters are expressly enjoined not to work their slaves on Sundays *from midnight to midnight*." Slaves shall not be worked before day-break, nor after night-fall, "*except when employed at the sugar-mills and in other manufactories, or extraordinary occasions of forced crops absolutely requiring continued labour*." But even then "*the same slaves shall not be worked during two nights consecutively*, except when the gang shall have been divided into watches, and then, *the same watch shall not be worked more than half the night*." This rigorous exaction has since been qualified by an amendment which says, that eight consecutive hours of rest shall be secured to the slave in the 24 hours.

5. The clothing fixed for the slaves for each six months is, for the men, one shirt and trowsers;—for the women, one chemise and petticoat.

6. The master is exempted from feeding his slaves, except with cod fish, if he gives them a day every week out of crop, and half a day in crop, besides Sunday, for working their provision grounds. If he gives them an additional day in the week, over and above the day out of crop and half a day in crop, he is exempted from feeding them at all.

7. Once in each year Commissioners shall inspect the plantations. The three owners whose gangs have most increased shall have prizes of 4000, 2000, and 1000 livres, provided their plantations have been administered according to law, and provided there has been no well-founded complaint against them on the part of any of the slaves. The mother in these three gangs having the largest number of living children shall be manumitted together with one of her children, at the public expense.

8. The barbarous principle of paying to the owner the value of his slave who is condemned to death and executed, or who being a runaway, is killed in flight, is retained in this code.

9. The slave's right of property is better secured to him in St. Lucia than elsewhere; and he has this further advantage conceded to him, that he may have "an action in his own name when he claims his freedom as a right."

10. "Slave evidence is admissible in all cases, civil and criminal, except against the slave's master."

11. The penal laws against slaves are dreadfully severe; and it is much to be lamented that they should have been confirmed by Lord Bathurst, we trust they will be revised. A fugitive slave for a second offence suffers *a month's solitary confinement and 100 lashes*; for a third *200 lashes and three years hard labour in the chain gang*; for the fourth *death*. A slave assisting another in escaping, or attempting to escape from the colony, shall suffer 200 lashes and three years hard labour.—A slave carrying steel arms of any description shall be deemed a felon.—A slave striking his owner, or his owner's wife or child, is guilty of felony, and in cases of aggravation shall suffer death. Slaves taken up masked, or trading, or selling sugar cane, coffee, &c. without their master's permission, or found straggling without a passport, &c. &c., shall be subject to penalties not exceeding 150 lashes and three years hard labour in the chain gang.

12. A slave marrying a free owner becomes free, and the issue though born before marriage is free also.

13. Persons in holy orders may baptize as free, children under the age of one year, though born of mothers in a state of slavery, the owner consenting thereto.

14. In all cases, he who affirms that a person is his slave is bound, except he be in actual possession, to prove his allegation; the presumption being in favour of natural liberty.

15. No authority whatever shall reduce to slavery a person free by birth or manumission, or by 15 years prescription.

16. Notwithstanding all Mr. Jeremie says in favour of the measure, we think it a most mischievous law which constitutes the owner, instead of the crown, the heir of an intestate slave.*

17. No less objectionable seems the power which Mr. Jeremie would give to the Commissaries of quarters, of inflicting forty lashes on the

* Papers, &c. 1827, Part ii, p. 163.

female slave. We trust that his reasoning on the subject will not induce Government to depart from their principle.*

An account is given in these papers of an enquiry into some cases of cruelty, one of which appears to have been very satisfactorily established. It is that of Maria Rose, who had been handcuffed by the order of a Mr. M'Gowan, and her feet being tied, her arms were raised above her head, and hung by the handcuffs to a nail, in such a manner that her heels were elevated considerably above the ground; the whole of her weight resting either upon the handcuffs, which were hung upon the nail, or upon her toes; in which position she remained for nearly two hours.† The Attorney General was ordered to prosecute M'Gowan, who was found guilty, and sentenced to pay £50; but the punishment being thought inadequate, there had been an appeal from the sentence.

XVII. ST. VINCENT'S.

The legislature of this Island threw out the eight Bills, proposed to them by Lord Bathurst, without a division, ‡ conceiving that they had already gone as far with their ameliorations as prudence would allow, in the Act of December, 1825, of which a brief sketch will be found in the 11th number of the Anti-Slavery Reporter, p. 163. Its imperfections, however, will be still more clearly seen by referring to a despatch of Earl Bathurst, of April 3rd, 1827, in which, while he leaves the Act to its operation, he takes occasion to make a variety of observations upon it to the following effect. §

Several of the measures, he observes, recommended by the Government, and approved by Parliament, are either wholly omitted, or imperfectly accomplished.—No protector of slaves is appointed; Female flogging is not prohibited; No presumption against the master is made to arise from traces of recent punishment; The separation of families, by judicial process, is not prevented; Saving banks are not instituted; No incapacity of holding slaves is made to follow cruelty, however frequent; The provisions respecting the property of slaves, are most defective and inadequate; So are the regulations respecting marriage, the observance of the Sunday, the prevention of compulsory labour on that day, and the abolition of Sunday markets; Equally imperfect and inef-

* Ibid. p. 155.

† Ibid. p. 141.

‡ Ibid. p. 312.

§ Ibid. p. 110—114.

ficient are the provisions respecting manumission; Men and women are punished alike, while the master's power of punishing them extends to 39 instead of 25 lashes; No time is interposed between the offence and the infliction; The presence of a free witness is not required; The record of punishments proposed is wholly inadequate to its purpose; The *whip in the field* may still be used by a *free* person, or the cat by a *slave*.

His Lordship further points out many defects in their criminal laws, such as punishing the *intent* to commit a crime in the same manner as the crime itself; also punishing *capitally* the superstition of Obeah, *any* personal "injury" done by a slave to a free person, the "imagining the death of a white person," and the holding meetings "for *any* unlawful and dangerous purpose;" and he complains, generally, of the vague and indefinite expressions which are used to describe even capital offences. To two other points we were glad to find his Lordship, at length, strongly objecting. One is, the practice of indemnifying the owner for the loss of his slave, in cases of capital conviction; a measure which, as a general rule, he conceives "may be productive of great mischief and injustice, depriving the master of a strong motive for preventing the commission of crime by his negroes, and depriving the slave of the protection which the self-interest of the master might otherwise afford him." "His own neglect of domestic discipline and instruction, may have occasioned the offence for which the slave has suffered."

The other point to which he objects is the system of punishing slaves who complain against their masters, but fail in proving the truth of their complaints. "Unless punishments of this kind," he remarks, "are administered with extreme caution, they will have a direct tendency to prevent the most just and reasonable complaints. The law ought not to authorize the punishment of a complaint, simply because no conclusive proof is adduced to justify it." It should be *proved* to be "groundless or frivolous, if not malicious, before the party complaining is punished for preferring it."

And yet this very principle, against which Lord Bathurst here so justly and forcibly remonstrates, now forms a part of the Trinidad Order, having been added to it by proclamation, on the 23rd of June, 1824.

His Lordship further exposes the total inefficiency of the law of slave evidence as it now stands. No slave can give evidence who is not baptized

by a *clergyman*, or whom a *clergyman* does not certify to be of good character, and to understand the nature of an oath; thus disqualifying the unbaptized, and the disciples of all other religious teachers than those of the established church. “What is still more objectionable, is the necessity imposed of obtaining another certificate, to the same effect, from the proprietor, or manager of the slave,” who may have a motive to prevent the slave from being heard as a witness. A slave, moreover, cannot be a witness in any *civil* case; or, in any criminal case, against his owner, manager, &c. His evidence is besides clogged with many other difficulties.

Lord Bathurst has rendered a most essential service to the cause of humanity, by recording these observations, which are, almost all, just as applicable to Jamaica, and indeed to the other slave colonies, as to St. Vincent’s. It is a most painful consideration that laws, of which such things can with truth be asserted, should now be in operation under the deliberate sanction of His Majesty’s Government.

XVIII. TOBAGO.

Nothing has been done by the legislature of this colony, in consequence of the recommendations of His Majesty’s Government, in March and May, 1826. There has arisen, however, much interesting discussion on the part both of the Council and of the Assembly, between whom there exists a difference of opinion on most of the topics embraced by Lord Bathurst’s eight Bills. Of those Bills, however, it is due to his Lordship to state the sentiments entertained by Mr. Macbean, the enlightened lawyer who fills the office of Attorney-General in Tobago. “To me,” he says, “they appear throughout framed with the most anxious care to prevent any serious injury to the proprietor, while they certainly contain *many enactments which, if carried judiciously into effect, would confer lasting benefits on the slave.*” His Lordship might, therefore, have confided more implicitly in the capacity which exists in this country, of legislating more justly and beneficially for all parties concerned, than the colonial legislators, in general, have shewn themselves qualified or disposed to do. And not only does Mr. Macbean, but the legislative Council of Tobago, seem to be of the opinion that the Bills which have emanated from Downing Street, are quite as well calculated for the meridian of the West Indies, as if they had proceeded from an assembly of planters. The Council express a most decided

opinion, that “ many of the proposed new regulations may be adopted *with perfect safety, and some prospect of advantage to the slave*; and none of them are so objectionable, but that, under proper modifications, their principles may not be, in some measure, adopted.” They approve of the appointment of a Protector armed with suitable powers. Slave evidence they wish to be received in all criminal courts, without any restraints which do not apply universally. They have some reserves, but of a somewhat unreasonable kind, on the subject of manumission.* *They have no objection to legalize the marriage of slaves.* Sunday markets are already abolished, and they approve of enforcing the observance of that day. They accede to the conferring of rights of property on slaves, and to the establishing of saving’s banks. They recommend the non-separation of families by judicial sale, but, (somewhat squeamishly, considering all things,) they object to the admission of *reputed* wives and husbands within the pale of the immunity; although it is a fact quite notorious, and recorded by the very authorities of Tobago themselves, that no marriage of slaves has ever taken place there.†

On the only remaining point, the mode and degree of punishments, the Council approve of putting down the driving whip; but they do not approve of postponing punishments for 24 hours, or of ceasing to flog females. Females, however, they observe, with a commendable tenderness, might be flogged with a cat instead of a whip, and indecently exposed to no male eye, but those of the person ordering the infliction, the driver, and another witness; that is, three men at least. They do not object to a record of punishments, but they decidedly object to allowing fresh lacerations, unaccounted for, to raise a presumption of illegal punishment against the master; or to allowing either atrocious cruelty to produce the forfeiture of the sufferer to the Crown, or a repetition of such cruelties to disqualify the perpetrator of them to hold slaves.

* They would permit no female to be freed who gained money by concubinage; that is to say, in other words, they would have *no* female slave freed, for all the female slaves in Tobago live, and have always lived, in concubinage. There is even now no law authorizing the marriage of slaves in Tobago, and the report made thence to Parliament is, that in that colony no marriage of slaves has ever been celebrated. And yet they gravely propose, that no female shall be freed who lives in concubinage! And why is not the same principle applied to the men? They equally live in concubinage.

† The effect, therefore, of such an exception, would be that the law would be a dead letter. It would apply to no one husband or wife in Tobago!

They decidedly object also to some of the more prominent barbarities of the former code, retained in the improved Act of 1823, such as making the wounding of any free person, and the compassing of death of a free person, capital offences; and also to the monstrous inconsistency, “that two or more slaves who could give evidence to convict of murder a fellow slave, should be counted as nothing, in the scale of legal demonstration, should the accused happen to be a person of free condition.” “This glaring absurdity of rejecting or receiving testimony, according to the colour or condition of the individual, ought immediately to be remedied.”*

To these opinions of the Council, those of the Assembly form a frequent contrast. The Assembly are of opinion that the Act of 1823 “embraced almost every measure which could tend to the happiness and comfort of the slave.” The appointment of a Protector they regard as wholly uncalled for. Compulsory manumission they conceive would be the entire destruction of slavery, root and branch. They see, however, no evil likely to ensue from admitting the evidence of slaves in all cases. They evidently prefer the present state of concubinage among the slaves to marriage.† They do not object to preventing *unnecessary* labour on Sunday, and to giving rights of property to slaves, or forming saving banks; but they hesitate as to not separating *reputed* husbands and wives. To the whole system of reform, in respect to the whip, flogging females, keeping a record of punishments, visiting cruelty with the forfeiture of the slave, &c., they most strenuously object.‡

Thus stands the matter in Tobago, while with all their professions of humanity, their slave population decreases at the rate of 2 per cent. per annum.

XIX. TORTOLA.

There is no return from this island.

XX. TRINIDAD.

The returns from this island contain a great variety of miscellaneous information.

* Ibid. p. 128.

† What nation in the earth is so savage as not to understand the nature and duties of marriage? And yet the legislators of Tobago wish their slaves to serve a long apprenticeship of cohabitation, before they are allowed to be man and wife. What is marriage, but cohabitation legalized, and rendered permanent and exclusive?

‡ Papers, &c. 1827, part ii. p. 115—138.

I. The Council on the motion of Mr. Burnley have requested Earl Bathurst to permit the publication, in the Gazette of the Island, of all complaints of master and slave against each other, and of the decisions upon them, with the view of silencing calumny, and shewing that no reforms were necessary in a colony where slaves are already so well protected by law. Lord Bathurst has complied with the request. Let the apparent inference however from this publication be ever so favourable to the planter, in a colony where a slave, making a complaint which he fails to prove, is liable to punishment for having made it, it is surprising that it should not have occurred to Mr. Burnley and the council, that that inference will weigh but as a mere feather in the scale against the fact of an annual decrease of the slave population, by the excess of deaths over births, to the enormous extent of $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. per annum. This circumstance being lately mentioned to a planter of Trinidad, who has resided in that colony for twenty-five years, he remarked very emphatically, “You need not wonder at that mortality: it is the sugar which kills them: more of it is made in proportion in Trinidad, than anywhere else.” This is literally the case. More sugar is made in Trinidad per negro than in any other British colony. It amounts to about twelve cwt. for each slave.

II. A further proof of the necessity of interference in the government of the slaves in Trinidad is furnished by a recent occurrence detailed in these papers, pp. 265—271, and in which Mr. Burnley himself acted a prominent part.

Pamela Monro, a female slave, eighteen years of age, whose mother was desirous of manumitting her, was ordered to be appraised in the usual way, by two appraisers, Thomas Le Gendre and William H. Burnley, esqs. These appraisers, not attending simply to the plain terms of the oath they had taken to make “a fair and impartial appraisement;” but having recourse to sophistical and constructive inferences from a misinterpreted instruction of Lord Bathurst, declare their judgment to be, that “Pamela Monro *is fully worth* the sum of 1200 Mexican dollars perfect (viz. 260*l.* sterling), *and they do place that value upon her.*” The fair and real value of this young woman in the market, might be about 80*l.* or 85*l.* sterling: the appraisers form an imaginary valuation of her, which amounts to three times this sum; a decision which has of course doomed the wretched Pamela to remain a slave.

The Protector of Slaves, Mr. Gloster, having been applied to on this occasion, stated that the appraisement of this poor girl far exceeded any other since the promulgation of the Order in Council. The very highest appraisement of any Slave, even of the most valuable class, had been 169*l.*, and this man was a head boiler, and a tolerable mason, carpenter, and blacksmith, whom his owner considered it impossible to replace. Another slave, who acted as a store-keeper and out-door collecting clerk, and who was in every respect a confidential servant, had been sold for 162*l.* 10*s.* sterling. Four head drivers had been also appraised, all very intelligent and confidential persons; one of them, capable of conducting a Cocoa Estate, at 150*l.* sterling; another at 140*l.*; another at 120*l.*; and a fourth (*whom his former master at this very time employs as an overseer for daily wages*) at 97*l.* 10*s.* sterling.

The observations of the Protector of Slaves on this transaction are invaluable. They are as follows:

“The appraised value of slaves manumitted, under the provisions of the Order in Council, for the first eighteen months after it came into operation, does not average much more than one-half of the general average for the last twelve months.”—(That is to say, since the unhappily misconstrued despatch of Lord Bathurst became public.) “The selling or market price of slaves, however, has not experienced a commensurate rise; and therefore it is evident, that the magnitude of the appraisements *lately made* are not occasioned by the increased value of slaves.

“While the market price of slaves continues as at present, I would consider the application of other principles of appraisement to any common case, as *an injustice to the slave, and an encroachment on the rights conferred upon him by the law.*

“To my apprehension, *the only fair criterion by which the value of a slave can be ascertained, is the usual market price*; and although that price has risen considerably within the last twelve months, the criterion afforded by it is far exceeded by the generality of appraisements.

“It is also certain that the market price will rise in proportion to the decrease of the number of, or difficulty of procuring, *plantation slaves*. It is, therefore, *UNJUST to add to the real value, or market price, of the slave purchasing his freedom, a portion of the value*

of the estate to which the slave is attached, until it becomes impracticable to continue the cultivation of the estate, in consequence of the impossibility of procuring a substitute for the slave who is to be enfranchised.*

“The opposite opinions are very generally diffused, and, however controvertible they may be by argument, *I cannot indulge even the hope that they will be easily eradicated, or prevented from operating very seriously to the disadvantage of the slaves desirous of becoming free.*”

“The principle,” (which principle was assumed and avowed by the appraisers of Pamela Monro) “that the value of the slave should be estimated at the amount of the capital required to yield a revenue equal to the hire which could be obtained for the slave, is evidently fallacious, from the fact that, every day, instances occur of slaves being bought for four hundred dollars,” (a third of the appraised value of Pamela Monro) “who, as Mr. Burnley mentions,” (of Pamela) “may be immediately hired at the rate of six dollars, or 1*l.* 6*s.* sterling per month, fed, clothed, and the capital guaranteed; the corresponding capital to which, at six per cent., (the ordinary rate of interest in Trinidad) is 1200 dollars, or 260*l.* sterling, the appraised value of Pamela Monro. Yet surely, it could not be pretended that the latter sum was the real value of a slave that was bought for one third of the sum, (400 dollars) and that could not be resold at an advanced price. This, I submit, *PROVES that the market price is the only just and fair criterion for determining the value of a slave.*”

This luminous and convincing exposition of the case is highly creditable to its author, Mr. Gloster; and so undeniably just and reasonable in itself is this method of ascertaining the indemnity due to the planter for the loss of his slave, that it is precisely the method which has been prescribed, by every legislature in the West Indies, whenever a slave is taken from his master for any public purpose, or is executed, or banished for a criminal offence. The value, in such case, is assessed by a Jury according to the fair market price, and they are not allowed to go beyond it. Had Pamela Monro, instead of being a claimant for freedom, been condemned to the gallows, she would have been

* And not even then, for even in that case the market price would still be the criterion of value.

equally lost to her owner ; but in that case, Messrs. Le Gendre and Burnley would not have been permitted to award, even on their oaths, more than a third part of 1,200 Mexican dollars, as her fair and just appraisement.

It appears from what has passed in Trinidad on this occasion, that even the binding solemnity of an oath does not secure a fair measure of justice to the slave ; and that if the Government and Parliament wish to fulfil their pledges, steps must forthwith be taken to obviate the effects of such deviations from fairness and impartiality. And if even the sanctions interposed, in such a case as this, are unequal to resist the influence of that sympathy, which the holders of slaves feel in favour of the master, and against the slave ; how can the Government and the Parliament continue to intrust, to the conscience and feeling of such men, the more difficult and delicate and complicated task of legislating for their wretched dependants ?

III. From the first promulgation of the Trinidad Order, we have not failed to insist strongly on the injustice of that part of it which regulates the evidence of slaves, as being at war with every sound principle of jurisprudence, and as being a deterioration instead of an improvement of the condition of the slaves of Trinidad. On the 9th of July, 1823, the Council of that island declared that it was already the law there, that the testimony of slaves should be received *quantum valeat*. Notwithstanding this previous state of the law, the Order in Council promulgated in March, 1824, lays the right of slaves to give evidence under many grievous restraints. First, the certificate of a teacher of religion is required. Such certificates, however, have not been obtainable in Trinidad, where teachers of religion are still more rare, it would seem, than in our other colonies. Accordingly, only one such certificate has been produced in Court since the promulgation of the Order. That is to say, only one slave has become competent, according to the new law, to do that which all slaves might have done before its enactment. It is true, that the Order contains a proviso, that the regulation, as to certificates, should not “take away or diminish any power which any criminal court has now to admit, in any case, the evidence of persons in a state of slavery.” This proviso, however, has appeared to the colonial Courts to do no more than to authorize them to exercise a discretion as to receiving or rejecting slave evidence, and, under this impression, they have thought that they best used that discretion, and best fulfilled the

intentions of His Majesty's Government by rejecting the evidence of all slaves, as incompetent, who are not fortified with the required certificate. The Chief Judge distinctly says, that he regarded the general principle inculcated in the Order to be that slaves are, in themselves, incompetent witnesses. He should therefore have thought that he was counteracting His Majesty's intentions, had he substituted his own views of competency for what the Order seemed to regard as alone indicative of competency, namely, the certificate of a teacher of religion. Lord Bathurst expresses himself greatly dissatisfied with this interpretation of the law, and yet it seems the fair and natural construction; and therefore, to us, the terms of the Order have always appeared most unjust and illiberal.

It is quite obvious that all attempts to modify the established rules of evidence, so as to meet the unreasonable prejudices of the planters, can only issue, like the attempt in Trinidad, in complete failure. There is but one principle which, in regulating this subject, can be safely acted upon, and that is, for tribunals to admit freely all witnesses, of whatever class or colour, judging of their competency and credibility by the ordinary rules of evidence. The arguments of Mr. Peel on this subject, in his Speech of the 1st of March, 1826, are quite unanswerable.* And we trust that when the Trinidad Order is revised, as is stated to be the intention of Government, they will attend to Mr. Peel's just and luminous suggestions on this point. Would any man in his senses propose to confine the right of giving testimony, in the courts of British India, to baptized persons, or to persons instructed in Christianity, as is done in Trinidad? The religious pretence on which this strange restriction is founded, is, without doubt, a very convenient plea for getting rid of an obnoxious measure, on the part of those too whose own total neglect of religious instruction, and even whose hostility to it have alone produced the ground for that plea. When the Order is revised, we trust that this, and the many other defects in the evidence clauses, as well as in the Order generally, will not be overlooked.† Among those defects the hitherto total absence of the means of religious instruction, the authorized and protracted continuance of Sunday markets, and the withholding of the promised day, in lieu of Sunday, from the slaves, are points particularly worthy of early attention. All

* See *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, No. X. p. 103. † *Ibid.* No. XI. p. 132.

the local authorities combine in representing the destitution of the means of religious instruction as most deplorable.

IV. Sir Ralph Woodford having been called upon, with a view to the proposed revision, to forward suggestions on the subject, has addressed a letter to Mr. W. Horton, in which will be perceived, with no small regret, a strong leaning in favour of the master's convenience as against the slave's comfort. The following instances will serve to illustrate this feeling.

1. He proposes that work should cease at eight on Saturday night, instead of sunset, and that it should commence at four on Monday morning, instead of sunrise.

2. He proposes that only the night, and not twenty-four hours, should elapse before a crime is punished.

3. He proposes that returns of punishment should not be made oftener than twice or even once a year.

4. He wishes the regulations respecting returns of punishment to be relaxed.

5. He objects to the 21st clause, (the most valuable clause in the whole code,) which raises a presumption against the master on the exhibition of recent lacerations on the body of the slave.

6. He doubts the propriety of the marriages of slaves, and thinks the people averse to them.*

7. He proposes that slaves, having money in the Savings' Banks, might commute their corporal punishments for money.

8. He would compel slaves to account for the manner in which they earn the sums carried to the Savings' Banks.

9. He even wishes the rules respecting Manumission to be modified, so as to meet the views of the planters.

10. The clause requiring a bond to be given on the manumission of young children, to prevent their being hereafter burdensome, he says is avoided by having infants registered, *as free*, in the Church register, when baptized; meaning, of course, to intimate his wish, (a most revolting wish!) that this humane proceeding should be prevented by law; in this respect, directly opposing the more merciful course adopted by Mr. Jeremie in St. Lucia.

* In what other country in the world, civilized or savage, is marriage not cherished? Its absence in Trinidad, in conjunction with the heavy sugar culture, and the cruel exaction of labour caused by it, sufficiently accounts for the mortality there.

11. He objects to the fines and forfeitures for cruelty as too heavy, and as unreasonably menacing.

12. He objects to the restriction on slaves working for hire on Sundays, and says, it is easily and generally evaded. They pot sugar on Sundays, for which they get a good lump of sugar. All industrious slaves work in their grounds on Sunday, and some hire others on that day, and even *free people*, to work their grounds during the week. *

13. There seems to remain a strong hankering after the flogging of women. "It requires," says the Governor, "great patience to bear with the provoking tongues and noise of the women;" and yet he admits that those who were most averse to the Order have confessed that their fears on the subject had not been realized.

The Governor states, that the negroes were generally conducting themselves well, and that task work was becoming general. The women, he says, are every where complained of as unmanageable. The planters, doubtless, wish to resume the practice of flogging them.

He is very anxious that there should be no fresh discussions in this country respecting slavery. In that case he thinks that things would go on quietly.—No doubt they would, and the slaves would go on quietly to die off at the rate of nearly three per cent. per annum. But Sir Ralph is greatly mistaken, if he supposes that this is a state of things which can, in deference to his wishes or those of the Planters of Trinidad, be suffered to proceed *quietly*.

V. Sir Ralph Woodford has addressed a letter to Mr. Wilmot Horton, on the subject of free labour.† Having had, he says, "an opportunity afforded him of obtaining accurate information of the comparative disposition of the Spanish peons (or free labourers) to *labour* and

* We have no doubt that the principle on which the Order of Council has proceeded, in respect to the observance of Sunday, is altogether vicious, and that it requires a complete change. Sunday markets should have been wholly abolished, and a day in lieu of Sunday given to the slave, and then all that the law had to do was to prevent the master from compelling the slaves to work for his benefit on the Sunday, except when the occasion was pressing; and then to pay them a liberal sum (not in "lumps of sugar," but in money) for their labour. All the other useless and unavailing restrictions, as to slaves working voluntarily, might then have been done away, only providing, as in this country, for the decent external observance of the Sabbath. See this subject fully discussed in the *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, No. 11. p. 132—135.

† Papers, &c. 1827, Part ii. p. 258.

idleness, and that upon an extensive number, and a work on which they were certain of their pay in cash," he sends a statement of the days they worked in 1825, being somewhat more than half the working days in the year. Now this statement, pretending to accuracy of information, really affords no information at all. It does not tell us what were the wages afforded to the peons in this particular work, nor the proportion which these wages bear to the profit of other and easier employments. It does not tell us whether they had grounds of their own, which it was their interest to cultivate, and for which it was necessary to detach a portion of their time. But we are drily told that they worked only fourteen or fifteen days in the month at this particular employment, and are left to infer that it was their *idleness* which prevented them from working more. This is clearly not the fairest method that could have been adopted of elucidating the subject of free labour. If the weight of official authority is to be brought to bear against freedom, care at least should be taken that the materials for forming a correct judgment should be given, and that the decision of so grave a question should not be left at the mercy of the *italics* in a letter of Sir Ralph Woodford.

VI. These illustrations of the subject of free labour are followed by a communication, disclosing some important facts made known to Sir Ralph Woodford by a Mr. Peschier, who is employed under him in managing an estate and a gang of slaves sequestered to His Majesty in Trinidad.* The Crown, it thence appears, is the owner of slaves who are worked for its profit, in the same way as are the slaves of the planters generally, and so worked as to produce exertion beyond their physical strength; and this last fact is as coolly spoken of as if it involved nothing opprobrious. The tasks set the slaves, we are distinctly told by Mr. Peschier, were such that, in order to execute them so as to redeem a small portion of the day for their own objects, they were led to work beyond their strength. Now, in this country, it is well known that men who undertake task work are often induced to work beyond their strength; but that is because they are paid in proportion to the work they perform. If the negroes of Carapechaima Hall (for such is the name of the king's slave plantation) were paid in proportion to their labour, there would be found, in the natural desire

* Papers, &c. 1827, Part ii. p. 259.

of accumulation, a sufficient motive for a degree of exertion which might tend to impair their physical strength. But the case of these royal slaves is different. They receive no remuneration for their labour. Their exertions are for His Majesty's profit, not for their own; and they are not voluntary, but compulsory. The tasks they had to perform were tasks imposed on them by the manager appointed by the representative of the king, and which they were bound to fulfil, in the course of the day, on pain of being flogged. These tasks, it seems, were such as to require a degree of exertion beyond their physical strength, in order to gain a little time for their own use. In this case one would have expected that Mr. Peschier would have thought of lessening the tasks which were productive of these injurious effects. Such however was not his policy. He adopted the expedient, not of lightening the labour of the slaves, but of dividing their day's task into three portions, and obliging them to perform one portion of it before breakfast, about half past eight in the morning; another by noon; and the third after two o'clock.

The whole of this detail will be found to throw much light on several controverted topics.

1. It has been maintained that in the low lands of tropical climates, the negro will not work without compulsion. But compulsion was not the motive which stimulated the negroes in this instance to the extraordinary exertion of which Mr. Peschier complains. The dread of the stocks in the evening, and of the cart-whip in the morning was sufficient, without doubt, to induce them to finish the task allotted them in the course of the day, if it were practicable to do so; and Mr. Peschier must have supposed that they could do this with ease, and without over-exertion, otherwise he would have diminished the task. Why then did they over exert themselves? Why did they impose on themselves the pain of a more intense degree of labour in a tropical sun, when a less intense degree of it might have sufficed? It was obviously to gain for themselves time which they thought they could usefully or pleasantly employ for their own benefit or gratification. The inducement they had to work so much harder than was necessary, was obviously the prospective advantage resulting from it; in short the wages, of some kind or other, derivable from the use of the hour or two hours which they might be able to redeem, by increased exertion, from the king's cane piece. And is not this an affirmative solution

of the whole question, whether the negroes are or are not susceptible of any other stimulus to industry than coercion ?

2. One would have expected that such promising indications of a susceptibility of higher motives than those of brute force, would have induced Mr. Peschier not to have checked, but rather to have encouraged the feeling. Instead of this, a plan is adopted which at once extinguishes every effort of industry on the part of the slave ; leaves him no motive but the whip for completing his task ; and frustrates every rising hope he might have indulged, of eventual benefit to himself, from increased exertion in the service of the king. The proceeding is of a character both harsh and sordid, and its effect is both degrading and demoralizing. To have lessened the too oppressive task, and thus to have given fresh vigour to the nascent elation of hope, would have been the course which humanity and sound philosophy would have dictated. But this would have ill suited the meridian of Trinidad. There, the negro, like the galley slave at his oar, must be fixed to the hoe and to the cane piece from morning to night. He must not be allowed the luxury of purchasing, by quickened exertion, a consecutive hour or two in the day, to cultivate his own garden, or to visit a friend, or to enjoy his own domestic circle, or to fulfil any other object on which he may have set his heart. The elasticity of mind which such new facilities of enjoyment would produce, could not fail to redound to the master's advantage as well as to that of the slave. But it seems to be utterly beyond the contemplation of men habituated to West Indian feelings and principles, to regard the negro as a being to be operated upon by moral motives ; and when the influence of such motives begins to be developed by circumstances, as in the present instance, the object of the master is not to foster, encourage, and direct, but to crush and destroy them.

3. And if on an estate belonging to the King, and superintended by the King's representative, we witness such oppressive proceedings, such excessive tasks, such disregard of the feelings of the slaves, such indifference to their moral elevation, such an exclusive anxiety to convert the whole capabilities of their bodily frame to the profit of the owner ; what may be expected from the planters in general ? Can we hope that *they* should not act still more entirely on the same selfish and sordid principles ; and that they should not still more sternly exclude every consideration but that of their own profit ? And when we see

such a scene laid open to us as that which is exhibited on the King's plantation of Carapechaima Hall, can we any longer wonder that the excess of deaths over births, among the slaves in Trinidad, should amount to $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. per annum?

4. We are led in the last place, by this communication, to recur to a position which was insisted upon on a former occasion,* namely, that the master, being the sole judge of the quantum of labour to be required from the slave, under the penalty of such corporal punishment as he may choose to inflict, the danger to be guarded against, in the introduction of task work, is the excessiveness of the tasks. Interwoven as this subject is with the happiness and life of the slave, it is impossible to contemplate it without expressing an earnest hope that Government would turn its anxious attention to the means of guarding against the evils which may arise from the system of taskwork; for, though it possesses many advantages, it is nevertheless liable to many most serious abuses.

VII. The last topic in the communications from Trinidad respects the state of crime among the slave population. The whole number of slaves is about 22,000. Of these there were committed to gaol in two years, from June 1824 to June 1826, 616 males, and 249 females. But of this number, 148 men, and 103 women, were committed merely for insubordination to their masters, and 319 men, and 116 women for absenting themselves, probably from fear of punishment, or to escape the severe exaction of labour or other ill-treatment. The whole number, besides, of committals for crimes, as assaults, petty thefts, &c., was 148 men, and 30 women,—being at the rate of 89 committals in a year. The rest, amounting to 686 in two years, or 343 in one year, appear to have proceeded entirely from the course of plantation discipline.

This, however, is but a very insignificant branch of the history of crime in Trinidad. On examining the general result of the record, kept in the Protector's office, of offences committed and punished on the plantations, during the same two years, they are found to amount to the enormous number of 11,131. Now the returns, made to the Protector, are not of the whole slave population, but only of that on *plantations*; and if the slaves, not belonging to plantations, are reckoned at a fourth of the whole, there will then only remain a population of 16,500, by

* Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. XXVII, p. 66.

whom this amount of crime has been committed. It is, however, only the adult, or rather the working population who should be taken into this account. Estimating these at the large rate of two-thirds of the whole, the number of those will be reduced to 11,000, who can, with any propriety, be viewed as the offending mass to whom the record of the Protector can have any reference. In two years, therefore, we have 11,131 offences recorded of 11,000 individuals. That is to say, (taking the average,) it is as if every individual plantation slave in Trinidad, capable of offending, had, in the course of two years, been guilty of some offence, and had been punished for it by the sole authority, and at the sole discretion of the master or manager. Here we seem to have a picture either of extraordinary viciousness on the part of the slave, or of reckless and unmeasured oppression and tyranny on the part of the master. The great mass of delinquencies, however, and of consequent punishments, seem to arise, not out of any peculiar depravity on the part either of the master or slave, but out of the very institution of slavery itself, and out of its cruel and irremediable tendencies to evil. Take as an example, some of the items of this black catalogue.

Refusing to work, and disobedience	1,825
Insolence, insubordination, &c.	1,423
Absconding	1,181
Neglecting duty, neglecting to throw grass, coming too late to work, &c. &c.	3,215
	<hr/>
	7,644

The acts of stealing and theft amount to 773. Among the remaining offences are some of a very singular character. We shall instance a few of them.

Biting overseer	1
Biting driver	1
Holding and tearing driver's shirt	4
Seducing other men's wives	10
Infidelity to husbands	15
Neglecting prayers	121
Refusing to keep the sabbath	1
Idleness and laziness	34
Refusing to take medicine	9

Setting a bad example to children	3
Practising obeah	4
Lying	42
False complaints	109
Indecent language, &c.	40
False pretence of sickness	30

Of late, and since it has been proposed to abolish female flogging, the public has been deafened with loud complaints of the superior viciousness of the female slaves. An opportunity is now given of examining their truth. Those, indeed, who have watched the course of the West Indian controversy from its commencement, must have perceived how constantly the most material facts have been grossly misrepresented, either from ignorance or design, by those who alone had access to know them, that is to say, the resident colonists. For a great length of time they made the people of England believe that the decrease on their plantations arose from the excess of the men, as compared with the women. When, by means of registration, correct returns were at length obtained, it was found that, not in the aggregate only, but in almost every colony, the females exceeded the males.—So now, it is repeated to satiety that the women slaves are worse than the men, more frequent offenders, more insubordinate, and more liable to punishment. It has been already seen how this assertion is met by the gaol returns. In these, the number of female prisoners amounts to a little more than a third of the men. So in the Protector's return, the number of male offenders is 6,223, of women 4,908. There are indeed some particular delinquencies, in which the women outnumber the men; and these, it must be admitted with regret, for the credit of the sex, are—refusing to work, insolence, quarrelling and fighting with one another, lying too long in the morning, neglecting their prayers, and indecent language and behaviour.

Having now given an abstract of the proceedings with respect to reform which have occurred in the different colonies, it only remains to notice the reports which have been laid before Parliament from the two West Indian Bishops.

REPORT OF THE BISHOP OF JAMAICA.

With a single exception, all that is interesting in the communications of this prelate has respect to the parish of St. Thomas in the East: for we make no account of mere *projects* for erecting chapels and founding schools, which are, as yet, only in prospect, and not in actual existence and operation. What we desiderate from the Bishop is not so much a report of “the growing disposition” of the colonists “for instructing the slave and coloured population,” nor even of the numbers baptized and married, (for all this involves no sacrifice on the part of the planters,) but of the actual number of slaves, and also of free coloured persons, who are really enjoying the benefits of instruction; distinguishing those who attend the Sunday schools, and also the week-day schools; stating the frequency, and length, and hours of their attendance; the nature of the instruction they receive; and whether it be *oral* only; the time and means bestowed upon it; the progress made in acquiring the rudiments of knowledge, &c.;—also the numbers who attend religious worship, and the beneficial effects produced by the lessons of Christianity on their hearts and lives, together with an account of the obstacles which impede the progress both of education and religious instruction. On these points we have nothing which is specific and satisfactory—all is vague and indistinct. We hear of three deacons and five priests being ordained; of *oral* instruction on a Sunday in one parish, St. Thomas in the East, of which alone we seem to hear; of a Church missionary, who, on a single estate, is exerting himself laudably; and of a second parish, in which there is a beginning of effort on the part of a curate. With these exceptions, all seems future and contingent. In a state of things like this, where there prevails so universal a destitution of religious light, it is almost ludicrous to observe the style of the Bishop’s official communications with the Secretary of State. He seems to announce it as a triumph of religion that he has excluded from schools all books but those of the Society for promoting Christian knowledge. At the very moment that he is admitting the deplorable want of Christian instruction in the Bahamas, he speaks, with a kind of horror, of a layman who had been appointed a *preacher* by the local authorities, and who, officiating in a place of worship that was *unconsecrated* and *private property*, read every part of the Church service, including the absolution! to a large congregation, and expounded the Scriptures. “*I* can, of course,” says the Bishop, “have

no jurisdiction over this layman, but I cannot help observing on the *irregularity of a person not in holy orders, thus ministering publicly in the congregation.*" And was this not better than having no ministrations at all? And was it not a subject of rejoicing instead of censure, that a christian congregation had been formed, and the prayers of the Church devoutly used, and the Scriptures expounded, even by a layman, rather than that the worship of God should have fallen into utter neglect? At the same time the Bishop candidly confesses that this layman, who, by the way, is a FREE BLACK, of the name of Joseph Watkins, is a person, to the excellence of whose character it is his duty to bear testimony, and whose disciples, for he examined them himself, he found strictly brought up in the principles of the Established Church. And yet, instead of at once obviating all difficulty, and preventing all future irregularity, by at once ordaining this excellent and useful individual as a Minister of the Church of England, he propounds it as matter of grave consideration to Lord Bathurst, whether *Catechist* would not be a more appropriate title for Joseph Watkins, than that of *Preacher*, which the Bahamas' legislature have bestowed on him with a salary of £50 currency a year. The Bishop ought to have at once laid his hands on him, thanking God for having unexpectedly raised up such an instrument of good in that land of spiritual darkness.

REPORT OF THE BISHOP OF BARBADOES.

The Report of the Bishop of Barbadoes is still more meagre than that of his brother bishop, consisting of little more than proposals for building churches and parsonage houses, and memorials to the Secretary of State for public money to aid in defraying the cost of their erection. Schools and places of worship are spoken of, as *about* to be established; but we hear of scarcely any actually in operation, excepting one erected, on his estate in St. Vincent's, by Mr. Wilson the member for Yorkshire, who, it seems, is a planter of that island. The legislatures of several of the islands, have also been voting sums of money in aid of the funds for erecting places of worship, parsonages, &c.

It seems to be the policy of the bishops to say nothing of the people of their diocese but what is favourable: we hear much of their good *dispositions*, their liberal *intentions*, their *kindnesses*, and *courtesies*; but not a word of opposition or counteraction. In pursuance

of this policy, a strict silence has been observed as to what passed during the bishop's visit to Demerara, and his rude reception there; and not one syllable has been allowed to transpire of the difficulties experienced in Barbadoes, where the instruction, of which so hopeful a promise was given in the report of last year, has been retrograding, instead of advancing. In that report, the bishop spoke, in high terms of satisfaction, of the efforts making by the Rector of St. Lucy's parish, the Rev. Mr. Harte, for the improvement of the slaves, all of whom, with scarcely an exception, were then stated to be under religious instruction. Since that time, however, these fair appearances have vanished; and Mr. Harte, for no cause but his zeal in the performance of his duty, has become a proscribed man, the only planter in the parish who continued to admit him to his estate, Mr. Leacock, having, on that account, been in a manner excluded from society. It may be unfair to blame the bishops for their silence on such points; but then let us at least understand the principles on which their reports are framed. For, of course, it is only by knowing the whole of the case, that a just estimate can be formed of the real progress which is making; and it is clear, that if only the favourable side of things be exhibited, and the unfavourable be systematically withheld, Parliament, and the public, will, in fact, though not in intention, be widely misled.

It appears that it must have been on some such principle as this, that the bishop's relation composed his "Six Months' Tour in the West Indies;" and the effect of which, therefore, (whatever may have been the writer's purpose and motive, which we mean not to arraign,) has been, undoubtedly, greatly to deceive and mislead the public.

Nothing can be clearly and satisfactorily known, respecting the progress of education and instruction, until the bishops shall require from all their clergy, catechists, and teachers, periodical returns, detailing all the particulars necessary to be known; such as will admit of it, being ranged in a regular, prescribed, tabular form, so as to obviate the vagueness, and indistinctness, which attach to the present mode of communication. And such returns are due to parliament, and the public, who are defraying much of the expence of the ecclesiastical establishment, and of the plans formed for the diffusion of religious knowledge among the slaves.

POSTSCRIPT.

SUNDAY LABOUR IN TRINIDAD.

The preceding pages were printed previous to the appearance of another document connected with the Island of Trinidad, entitled, "Copy of all Laws and Regulations which prescribe the time to be allowed to Slaves in Trinidad, for the cultivation of their provision grounds." It was ordered to be printed June 12, 1827, and is numbered 465. The Guardian of Slaves states it to be the only regulation existing in the island of Trinidad on that subject, and to be part of an ordinance issued by General Picton on the 30th of June, 1800, soon after the colony came into the possession of Great Britain. It is as follows :—

"Exclusive of the allowance of salt meat or fish, (in which there can be no exemption,) every working negro of fourteen years and upwards, shall have a portion of land allotted to him adequate to produce, by cultivating it, a sufficiency of ground provisions for himself and his family; and to furnish him the more effectual means of doing so, he shall be allowed the Saturday, from noon, to work in his grounds, from the first day of July to the first day of January, if he belongs to a sugar plantation; and from the first day of January until the first day of July, if he belongs to a coffee, cocoa, or magnioc plantation. He will have also his Sundays, and the four great annual holidays of Christmas-day, New-Year's-day, Good-Friday, and Corpus-Christi."

By the existing law of Trinidad, therefore, a part only of 26 days in the year, besides Sunday, and four holidays, is given to the slave for the purpose of maintaining "himself and his family." After working in the cane or coffee field from five in the morning till noon, on Saturday, he is then dismissed to his grounds. And if the usual interval of two hours' rest at noon is allowed him, which, after seven hours continuous labour in the sun, seems indispensable, the time which he can employ in his grounds will not exceed five hours at the utmost. So that, with the exception of a little salt fish, the whole amount of what is allowed to the slave in order to obtain food for himself and his family, is 130 hours' labour in the year, being not equal to more than ten or twelve of those days which he gives to his master.

When the Trinidad Order in Council was first promulgated, a strong suspicion was entertained that the slave had been unfairly dealt with

on this point, and the total silence of the Order respecting it, did not tend to dissipate that feeling. Accordingly, in the Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society, published in 1825, (p. 72,) the subject was thus adverted to. “By the Trinidad Order, no day in lieu of Sunday is given to the slave. If there exist, therefore, no other order to that effect, the slave will be as much compelled by the necessity of the case to labour for his subsistence on that day, which is, in fact, labouring for his master’s benefit, as if the master stood over him with the whip. He must work on that day or starve. But what is actually, according to the law of Trinidad, the number of week-days in the year allowed to the slaves for labouring in their provision grounds? The number is *said* to be 26. It is obvious, however, that if 26 days be the time really allowed to the slave in Trinidad, besides Sunday, then they have 56 days less in the year than the Spanish law is understood to allow them. By that law, as well as by the law of Brazil, slaves are allowed a day in every week, besides Sundays, and 30 holidays in the year; and it merits inquiry how it is that, under the British Government, they should have been deprived of the full time to which the Spanish law, which is the law of the island of Trinidad, entitles them. In any case, now that Sunday has ceased to be a day of compulsory labour, it seems no more than strict justice, in addition to the number of week days hitherto enjoyed by the slaves, that a full and fair equivalent should be allowed them for the Sunday, otherwise they will either be much worse off for the means of subsistence than they were before, or they will still be driven to the necessity of employing the day of rest in labouring for their subsistence;—which is, in fact, doing that which the Order in Council, in terms, prohibits, *labouring for their master’s benefit* on that day.”

The subject has since been repeatedly and earnestly pressed on the attention of the public. But nothing has been done, and when after much delay, information has at length been obtained, as to the real state of the law, it appears that the Anti-Slavery Society had been too liberal in their estimate of its humanity, and that instead of 26, only 13 short days in the year are allowed the slave to cultivate provisions for himself and his family.

Can any thing be conceived more oppressive than the conduct of Great Britain has been, in this particular, towards the slaves of Trinidad,—an island which it was one of Mr. Canning’s early objects in life

to make the scene of an experiment in free labour? The Spanish law, as well as that of Brazil, gave to the slaves 134 days in the year which he could call his own, namely a day in the week, besides the Sundays, and 30 holidays. It had scarcely come into British possession when a proclamation from General Picton reduced that time to 69 days in the year, namely 52 Sundays, 4 holidays, and 13 days besides.

In 1824, however, came forward, in the shape of the Trinidad Order in Council, those grand measures of negro amelioration, which were thoroughly to reform the abuses of the slave system. But by this Order, the slave, instead of being benefited by the grant of additional time, is deprived of the 52 Sundays as days of labour, and no other days are given to him in their stead. He is thus left with only his 13 common days and four holidays,—so that even if Christmas-day, Good-Friday, &c., are devoted to toiling in his grounds, he has only 17 days which he can lawfully employ in raising food for himself and his family, instead of 134 in the first instance, and 69 in the second.

Well might Sir Ralph Woodford specify as one of the first practical difficulties attending the Order in Council, “the prohibition of Sunday labour.”* And, as might be expected, under the circumstances of the case, he states, that “working in their grounds is common to all industrious negroes on the Sunday;” and that even “the restriction on slaves working on Sundays for hire” is “generally evaded.” He therefore proposes that the restriction should be wholly done away. To these frank admissions, Sir Ralph Woodford ought, in fairness, to have added another;—that, under the existing regulations, if the slave did not employ the Sunday in his grounds, he must starve; and that nothing could have been more absurd than to assume, as the Order in Council seems to have done, that labour on the Sunday (from which labour the slave had hitherto principally derived his subsistence) could be abolished, unless equivalent time were given in lieu of it.

The appearance of this document has thrown new light on the lengthened communications which have taken place, during the last three years, between Lord Bathurst and Sir Ralph Woodford on the subject of Sunday labour. The whole of these communications wear now something like the air of a piece of grave irony played off upon his Lordship; the planters of Trinidad stickling on one side for their

* Papers of 1827, Part ii. p. 254.—See also above, p. 65.

right to the slaves' labour in his grounds on the Sunday; Lord Bathurst, on the other, proving most irrefragably, that they have no right to it; and yet, all the while, the slaves, according to Sir Ralph Woodford, adopting, *ex necessitate rei*, a practical conclusion in favour of the planter, and against his Lordship. His Lordship's reasons against Sunday labour are unanswerable; but as the slave has no other time allowed him, he must labour on that day or starve. Accordingly, he is compelled to labour on that day, if not, as formerly, by the flogging which awaited his neglect, yet by the gnawings of hunger, and the cries of his famished children.

Having stated these various authentic facts, on the subject of THE FURTHER PROGRESS OF COLONIAL REFORM, it is not intended, at present, to accompany them with any additional observations, but to leave them to their own effect on the public mind.

X 3

THE
PETITION AND MEMORIAL
OF THE
PLANTERS OF DEMERARA AND BERBICE,
ON THE SUBJECT OF
MANUMISSION,
EXAMINED:
BEING AN EXPOSURE OF THE INACCURACY OF THE STATEMENTS,
AND THE FALLACY OF THE VIEWS,
ON WHICH THEY HAVE PROCEEDED IN THEIR RECENT APPLICATION
TO HIS MAJESTY IN COUNCIL.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY FOR THE MITIGATION AND GRADUAL ABOLITION
OF SLAVERY THROUGHOUT THE BRITISH DOMINIONS;

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M.DCCC.XXVII.

[*Price Two Shillings.*]

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THE
PETITION AND MEMORIAL
OF THE
PLANTERS OF DEMERARA AND BERBICE,
ON THE
SUBJECT OF MANUMISSION,
EXAMINED.

IN pursuance of the Resolutions adopted by Parliament in May, 1823, on the subject of Slavery, his Majesty's Government introduced into Trinidad, by an Order of Council, a law to the following effect:— That in case any Slave shall be desirous to purchase the freedom of himself or herself, or of his or her wife or husband or child or brother or sister, or reputed wife or husband or child or brother or sister, it shall and may be lawful for any such Slave so to purchase the freedom of himself or of any such other person as aforesaid; and if the owner of the Slave shall be unwilling to effect his or her manumission; or shall be unable to execute a valid manumission; or shall not be known, or be disputed; or if the owner demand, as the price of freedom, a greater sum of money than may be the fair and just value of such Slave, then the Chief Judge, after issuing certain notices and summonses, shall cause the Protector of Slaves and the owner to nominate each an appraiser, the Judge himself nominating an umpire, who on their oaths, shall make a fair and impartial appraisement; and the amount of such appraised value being duly paid either to the owner, or, if the ownership be in dispute, to the Treasurer of the Colony, for the benefit of the real owner, such Slave shall be free to all intents and purposes whatsoever.—This is the substance of the law on the subject of manumission, omitting the more formal details of the enactment.

His Majesty's Government having imposed the above law on the colony of Trinidad, required that it should also be adopted in the colonies of Demerara and Berbice. With this requisition the Court of Policy of Demerara positively refused to comply; on which Lord

Bathurst, on the 9th July, 1825, intimated to them, that his Majesty's Government regarded the clause respecting manumission which they had so absolutely rejected, as "a vital part of their whole measure" which "could not be dispensed with." "No system of measures" he affirmed, would satisfy the feelings of the country, or execute the purposes of Parliament, which did not contain some direct provision by which the termination of Slavery may be gradually accomplished." "From the final accomplishment of this object," he again assured the Court of Policy, that "this country will not be diverted." "I now," he added, "for the last time, bring these regulations under the consideration of the Court of Policy, *with no other alternative, in the event of their declining to admit them, than that of my humbly submitting to his Majesty the expediency of enacting them by direct Royal Authority.*"

With a view of averting the execution of this threat, the Planters of Demerara, and also of Berbice, have presented a Petition and Memorial to his Majesty in Council, exhibiting the grounds on which they apprehend utter ruin to themselves and their property, if the intention of Lord Bathurst shall be carried into effect. The Petitioners have been heard by Counsel in support of their petition, and the matter now remains for the consideration and final decision of his Majesty's Government.

Under these circumstances it may be useful to pass in review the leading statements and arguments of the Petitioners and their Counsel, especially as they involve almost all the great questions at issue between the West Indian Planters and the Abolitionists. But before entering on these questions, it will be proper to advert to one or two topics which have been brought forward, with the view of vindicating the Petitioners, from any unfavourable imputation to which they might be exposed, by their resistance to the wishes of His Majesty's Government, on this occasion.

They assert, in the first place, their *ready* co-operation in all the other measures of Reform proposed by His Majesty's Government.

"The Court of Policy" they say, "has evinced the most anxious desire to act up to the Resolutions of Parliament." And Mr. Adam, the leading Counsel of the Petitioners, going even beyond the Petitioners, stated, on their behalf, that it was to this single clause respecting manumission, that the Planters of Demerara had refused to give their assent; and that on every other point they had set themselves with hearty goodwill to carry into effect the wishes of Government.

This statement, however, is contradicted by the official correspondence.* So far were the Court of Policy from *readily* adopting all the clauses proposed by Lord Bathurst, with this one exception, that his Lordship, in his despatch of 20th November, 1824, was under the necessity of refusing his assent to their draft of the 25th of June, 1824, and of peremptorily insisting on a more exact adherence to the terms of the Trinidad Order in Council.

The omissions and alterations in that draft, as compared with the Order, were numerous and important; and Lord Bathurst distinctly stated, that if the Court of Policy did not proceed forthwith to adopt the improvements he now suggested, His Majesty's Government "would feel it to be their paramount duty to issue without further delay an Order of Council for the purpose of carrying them into effect."

This intimation was not without its effect on the Court of Policy. In a subsequent draft transmitted to Lord Bathurst on the 14th of March, 1825, they introduced some important changes in compliance with his Lordship's suggestions. But even this amended draft, which has since, with a slight alteration, become the law of Demerara, falls far short of the propositions of His Majesty's Government on some other points, as well as on that of manumission. Without attempting to particularize the various defects, and injurious modifications of particular clauses, it will be sufficient to state, that Sunday markets have not been abolished, nor has Sunday labour been *effectually* prohibited; that in affecting to give a legal sanction to the marriage of slaves, they have introduced provisions which go far to render it of no avail; and also that the law, as to the slave's right of property, is left in a very imperfect state.† Besides all this, that important Clause of the Trinidad Order, the 21st, obliging the owner to account for the illegal laceration of his slave, is entirely omitted.

It cannot therefore be with truth affirmed, that the manumission

* Papers presented to Parliament by His Majesty's command 1825, pp. 196, 226, and additional papers 1825, p. 259, 279.

† The slave among other things is not allowed to hold land as in Trinidad. This is a very important and injurious distinction. Few things would have more tended to make manumission a source of improvement to the slave, than his previous possession of land of his own, prepared to receive him, and which he could immediately begin to till. It is from want of such means of beneficial employment, that on his enfranchisement, he sometimes falls into idle and vicious habits. See on this point the parliamentary papers of 1826, under the head of St. Lucia, p. 76, 77.

clause is that alone to which the Colonists of Demerara have refused their assent; or that they have manifested any very hearty goodwill in complying with the wishes of Government.

A second topic hinted at in the Memorial, but much insisted upon by the leading Counsel, was the great comfort and happiness enjoyed by the slave population of Demerara and Berbice, under the mild and benign government of their masters. On this point a full investigation was boldly challenged.

Unhappily for the credit of this part of their vindication, there is already before the public, opposing evidence of a nature which would not be invalidated by the concurrent testimony of every planter in the two colonies, in favour of the mildness and lenity of their administration. The actual decrease of the slaves in Demerara, has amounted to 8,754 in the six years, from 1818 to 1824, being nearly at the rate of two per cent. per annum.* And this enormous decrease has taken place while the free negroes of Hayti, and indeed of all parts of the world besides, and the slaves in the United States, and in the Bahamas, have been increasing at the rate of from 2 to 2½ per cent. per annum. There is no possibility of explaining this phenomenon on any principle which is compatible with the alleged humane treatment of the slave.

But in addition to this fact which, of itself, is demonstrative of the deathful tendency of the Demerara system of management, there is much corroborative testimony to the same effect. The Negro Slavery Tract, No. I, contains a particular account of that system by an eye-witness highly worthy of credit, the late Missionary Smith. The returns from the Fiscal of Demerara, as they stand in the parliamentary papers ordered to be printed 1st March, 1825, No. 66, may also be referred to. But above all may an appeal be made with confidence to the Report of the Fiscal of Berbice, (Parliamentary papers of 23rd of June, 1825, numbered 476,) and to the attempted vindication of that report by the Fiscal himself, laid on the table of the House of Commons, May 19, 1826, (No. 401.) A full view of these two Reports will be found in the Anti-Slavery Reporters, No. 5 and 16. In the latter it is observed that “to the sickening influence on the mind, of the details contained in these reports, no declamation could add force. They beggar the most intense epithets, and produce an impression

* See Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. 26, p. 11, &c., and the documents there referred to.

which no description, however eloquent, could hope to rival in poignancy and effect. And it is the climax of these horrors that most of them are not only not judicially punished, but are not legally punishable.”*

But before we proceed to consider the main question involved in the Memorial, that of manumission, it seems necessary to advert to what is affirmed by its authors on the subject of their *right of property in their slaves*. That right, they say, “*rests on the very same foundation with every other description of property known to the law.*” And in a former statement by the Court of Policy of Demerara, it is asserted, in confirmation of their doctrine, that “*Slaves in this colony are chattels as much as any other moveable property,*” the interest of an owner in his slave being that of *fee simple absolute*.

Without meaning at all to enter on the great moral question, of the right which any man can possess of reducing his unoffending fellow-creatures, and their still more unoffending offspring, to perpetual slavery, it may nevertheless be allowed us to doubt the *legal* soundness

* It was not intended to illustrate these general observations by any specific instances, but the single fact which follows, and which is only one of many, will serve to throw so much light both on the law and practice of Slavery in these Colonies, that it would be wrong to withhold it.

In the Fiscal’s first Report, p. 14, is contained a statement to the following effect.

“Complaint of the woman *Minkie*, belonging to Thomas C. Jones:—Says, Mr. Jones took her out of the barracks on Tuesday; ‘after I got home he sent me to Mr. Henery; he would not buy me. He sent me to another gentleman. I do not know his name, but he lives in town; they both said my master asked too much money for me, and sent me back. I begged for a pass to look for an owner; he said no, he would put me down and cut my —, and would give me more than the law gives. I was then laid down and tied to three stakes, and Chance flogged me with a cart-whip; I got a severe flogging; I saw Mr. Layfield at his door with another gentleman, and Mr. Kerschner, the baker, saw it from his window. Mr. Jones bought me from Mr. Logie of Demerara. I have marks of severe punishment visible on me, old and recent floggings, all inflicted by Jones.’

“Exhibits her posteriors, which are covered with a plaister, by order of the doctor, and apparently lacerated to that degree that the court judged it expedient to direct her not to uncover it.” (p. 14.)

“Mr. Jones said he *had* flogged her, and broke her mouth for her insolence. He had thirty-nine laid on her, and *they were well inflicted*. When he sent for her, he had no intention of flogging her; but after sending her to three persons for sale, and not succeeding, he told her she had often deserved a flogging; he then directed her to be flogged, and that they should be well laid on, which was done.”

The result of this case is given in the Fiscal’s Second Report, (p. 10.) and

of these strange dicta of the Court of Policy, and which they ought to have proved rather than asserted. It rests with them to point out the chapter of either Dutch or English law in which such a position is to be found. Mr. Adam did not attempt it. :

But even if so strange a position could be shewn to have a place under the Dutch law, it would not necessarily become law under the British rule, any more than the Spanish law of torture, which existed in Trinidad, could continue to be law subsequently to its becoming a

it is the more worthy of attention because it is actually given as a vindication of the Colonial system from the charge of cruelty ; whereas in truth it only furnishes another striking illustration of the cruel and oppressive nature of that system, and completes the picture of horror which the previous details had presented. " His Honour, the President, and the Court," we are told, " were highly indignant at the treatment of this female. No evidence, however, could be obtained to convict the proprietor (Mr. Jones) of having inflicted a severer punishment *than that prescribed by law.*" It is added that, " the Court were fully satisfied that the unfortunate female slave had been flogged *in a most severe and cruel manner*, and to her sufferings, by her master's own confession," (who indeed, seemed to glory in his barbarity) " was added the breaking of her mouth in a most brutal manner." In conclusion, her master was directed *to take her from the custody of the under sheriff, on payment of the fees.* She was returned, that is to say, into the power of this monster, by order of the Court.

Now let any one consider all the horrors of this clear and unambiguous case of cruelty, and the impunity which has attended it, and then say, whether the detestable system which can screen such conduct from justice, is not only to be endured by the country, but praised by the petitioners. The savage master was not proved, it seems, to have offended against the *law*,—this is true ; for he had done nothing more than the law expressly authorised every master to do. At his own caprice, for no earthly crime that even he himself could specify, he lacerated " in a most severe and cruel manner," the naked body of this unprotected and unoffending female ; but as it could not be *proved* that the number of stripes exceeded thirty-nine, however " well they were laid on," to use his own brutal expression of triumph ; however deep they cut into the flesh, and though he broke her mouth besides ;—no punishment could reach him ; nay, the law actually protected and sanctioned his crime. We have been told, by no mean authority in colonial matters, as a palliation of these evils, that atrocities are perpetrated in England as well as in the West Indies ; but we challenge all the advocates of the colonial system to produce any case, be it in law or practice, which will bear the remotest comparison to this transaction. It is an admirable illustration of the innate flagitiousness of that institution, which still finds so many plausible advocates among us, and which, owing to their delusive statements, is still permitted to flourish in mischievous vigour in one of the fairest portions of the British Dominions.

British colony. The Dutch law would have permitted the Slave Trade in Demerara : but could a claim have been therefore preferred by that Colony to the continuance of the Slave Trade after it had capitulated to the British arms ; much less after its cession to Great Britain, when, of course, the right of sovereignty and of legislation became fully vested in the British Crown ?

Supposing even that a law, authorising the Slave Trade, had been in full force in that Colony, at the time of its capture by Great Britain, could this circumstance have been pleaded for one moment as a ground for continuing that traffic after the Colony had become British ?

If it were even admitted, therefore, which it is not, that the law of property in Slaves had been such in Demerara under the Dutch rule as the Court of Policy represent it to have been, it would by no means follow that that law could continue to operate there under British rule, any more than the law of torture could continue to operate in Trinidad.

But it is not true, that, either under the Dutch or the British Government, the nature of an owner's property in his slaves is declared by law to be of that absolute and unqualified description which the Demerara planters have asserted. It does *not* rest "*on the very same foundation with every other description of property known to the law.*" Slaves are *not* in law "*chattels, as much as any other moveable property.*" Neither is a master's interest in his slave "*that of a fee simple absolute.*" On the contrary, in the case of slaves the law has assumed a power of interference and control which is not assumed with respect to any other description of property. An owner may extinguish the life of his oxen, or his dogs, or his horses ; he may refuse to feed them ; he may allow them to perish from neglect ; he cannot be restrained from working them by night or by day ; he cannot be compelled to give them the rest of the Sabbath ; he cannot be called upon to answer their complaints :—and with respect to his chattels generally, he may break them in pieces, destroy or consume them, without any responsibility, and without control from law, so long as he does not thereby injure the property of his neighbour. There are, therefore, very material points of distinction between all other kinds of property and a property in human beings.

But this is not all : no other description of property, no other chattel, has responsibilities inherent in it, and rights arising out of those responsibilities, similar to those which are inherent in the slave : for though he be a slave, he has been born a subject of the Divine Government, answerable, in common with every human being, for his moral conduct.

Every *British* slave is also a subject of the British crown, owing allegiance to him who wears it, bound to obey the laws, and amenable to trial and punishment for the breach of them. A slave, moreover, may be a Christian, a husband, a wife, a parent, a child; and in each of these relations, as well as in that of an accountable moral agent, and of a British subject, may possess responsibilities of the highest order, which he may be bound to fulfil, in preference to every other obligation whatever, and which his owner therefore may lawfully be compelled to respect. It cannot be, that the British and Christian owner of a slave can, *justly and legally*, be invested with any rights of property which are inconsistent with these inalienable responsibilities. It cannot be that, under the British crown, any such alleged rights of property can exist, without a plain and palpable violation of those fundamental principles of law which, however varied may be the form of their application, are essential to all British legislation. The assertion of such rights as these, by whomsoever made or whencesoever deduced, is an intolerable usurpation on the laws of God and the rights of human nature—on the rights of British sovereignty, and the fundamental principles of British jurisprudence.

The Petitioners and their Advocate have, therefore, clearly gone too far in the assertion of their unqualified right of property in slaves; and there must, of necessity, exist certain important limitations of that right, to which there is no parallel in the case of other descriptions of property.

The principle here contended for may be illustrated by what has recently passed in respect to Trinidad. When it was first proposed by Lord Bathurst to the Planters of that Colony, that Sunday should be wholly relinquished to the slave, as his own right and property, and that equivalent time for the purposes to which his Sunday had hitherto, for the benefit of the owner, been applied, should be allowed him in its stead, the Colonists preferred a claim to compensation for what they alleged to involve a deterioration of their property, being an abduction of a portion of that labour which they had hitherto appropriated to their own use. His Lordship's reply to this claim was, that such a regulation, as he proposed, could give to the Planters no just claim for compensation. Whatever might be the master's right of property in the slave, the slave, his Lordship maintained, had also "*his rights*." The master was bound to feed his slave, either by an adequate allowance of provisions, or by giving him land and time to raise them. But Sunday was the *slave's* day, and could not be required by the master for *his own* purposes. That day, he therefore argued, must belong to

the *slave entirely* for *his own* profit and advantage; and even where the master adopted the system of feeding his slaves, by allotting to them provision grounds, he could even then have no possible claim to the Sunday for the cultivation of such provision grounds, nor to any compensation for the requisite time during the six working days which he might appropriate to the slave in the lieu of Sunday for that purpose. And he added the expression of his hope, "that no Christian master would so far forget himself as to claim indemnity for what *his religion*" (the law of his God) "must have taught him he ought never to have required;" his Lordship, in short, thus pronouncing the practice to be a usurpation on the rights of our fellow-creatures, and a violation of the divine law.

In the case of Trinidad, the British Government had not hitherto forbidden the master to require that his slave should cultivate, on the Sunday, the provisions which were to support him while at work in the cane piece during the other six days of the week; and, in point of fact, he had been in the regular habit of requiring it. And yet no one will venture to say, that his Majesty's Government acted either illegally or unjustly, in forbidding the planters of Trinidad to continue to *compel* the slave to work for them on the Sunday; in obliging them, nevertheless, either to find him in food, or in time and land for its cultivation; and in rejecting, at the same time, their claim to any pecuniary indemnity whatever on account of such an arrangement.

It is obvious that this reasoning is no less applicable to every Slave Colony belonging to the British crown, than to Trinidad; and the principle on which it proceeds, and on which the decision of His Majesty's Government, in this instance, rests for its justification, is one which may legitimately be extended to a variety of other points connected with the right of property in slaves.

It will not be asserted, that in Demerara, any more than in Trinidad, the master's right of property extends to compelling the slave to labour for him on the Sunday. Even if such a practice had immemorially existed, it would not thereby have been rendered rightful, neither would its instant and entire abolition, by the power of the State, give the owner any just claim to compensation. It would not be enough for the Demerara Planters to apply to this case the language which, on the general question of Slavery, they have addressed to the mother country: "*You encouraged us to buy slaves, and to employ them in cultivation; and now, if you interfere in their management, or deprive us of any part of their time, which we have hitherto appropriated to*

our own use, you must first provide compensation." To such a claim, the mother country would clearly be entitled to reply, "I encouraged you, it is true, to buy slaves and to employ them in cultivation; and I therefore feel that, in forcibly putting a period to Slavery, I am bound to bear the loss in common with you. But I gave you no licence to deprive the slave of his Sunday. I gave you no authority to exact his toil on that day for your own benefit. I did not even know you had done so. Sunday is his own, by every law divine and human; and you not only have no right to claim indemnity for his being restored to the possession of it, but you ought to indemnify him for your unjust and protracted usurpation of it for your own benefit."

But may we not go still farther, and ask whether there be any thing in the right of property possessed by the Demerara Planter over his slave, which, while the mother country may lawfully interfere to secure to that slave the full enjoyment of the repose of the Sabbath, does not equally permit her to interfere to secure to him all his equally indubitable rights, and to redress all his real wrongs, whatever may be the alleged pecuniary loss arising from such interference?

Suppose, for example, it were clearly proved, that in Demerara the established hours of labour were so many, or the tasks exacted from the labourer so severe, or the food given to him so scanty, that the lives of the slaves were greatly shortened thereby; the mortality thus produced far exceeding the average rate of mortality under similar circumstances:—in that case, would not the supreme authority have a right to say to the planter, You shall increase the food of the slaves; you shall abridge their hours of labour; you shall lighten their tasks? And would it be deemed a satisfactory plea against the legality of such an interference, were the planters to say, "The slaves are *our fee simple absolute*; our *chattels*: they have hitherto yielded us, say thirteen or fourteen or fifteen hours' labour in the day, and have received from us fourteen pounds of flour, or so many plantains a week. If you cut down the labour to ten hours instead of fifteen, and raise the allowance to twenty-one pounds of flour instead of fourteen, we shall be immense losers;—we shall be ruined; and must have compensation for our loss. The produce of our estates will be diminished one-third, and the charge of feeding our slaves will be increased one-half—and to this extent we must be indemnified; for the guilt of Slavery is yours as well as ours. You must therefore bear the loss, and give us compensation." To such a claim as this also, might it not be justly said in reply, "No—you are bound, and always were bound, to act justly and humanely towards your

slaves; you are bound not to wear out their lives prematurely by excessive labour; you are bound to feed the human cattle who till your grounds with food sufficient for them. All this you are bound, and have always been bound to do, independently of any specific law; and if you have not done it, you have been equally guilty of violating the rights of the slaves with those who have deprived them of their Sunday. If we gave you a licence to buy and hold slaves, we gave you no licence to overwork or underfeed them; to kill them by inches; to extinguish their procreative powers, or destroy their health, or waste their lives by severity of labour and scantiness of food. You must regulate both their food and their labour, not by your past scale of profits, nor by your past practice, but by a consideration of what is right in itself; and, for doing this, which you ought always to have done, you cannot claim, neither shall you receive any compensation, but, on the contrary, punishment, if not for your past misconduct, yet for any future failure in your duty."

Now this hypothetical case is, in some material respects, the case of Demerara and of our other Colonies. The labour exacted from the slaves, and the food given them, be they more or less than has been supposed, are proved, by the result, to be inconsistent with a healthful state of population, and to produce effects that are wasteful of human life. And will it be permitted that the right of property which the Demerara Planters claim in their slaves shall be pleaded in bar of the measures necessary for preventing this waste, whatever pecuniary loss may attend those measures? And if not, what line is to limit the right of interference? Is not the State bound to cause the Planters to adopt measures for the intellectual and moral improvement, as well as for the physical comforts of their slaves; and may they not be fairly subjected to the same obligation of providing the means of education and instruction, for the labourers who till their grounds, which attaches to the landowners of Great Britain?

Thus it is clear, therefore, that there are various and peculiar modifications which go to affect that alleged right of property in human beings, which the Demerara Planters affirm to be absolute and unconditional, and to stand on the very same foundation with every other description of property; and for which modifications no compensation can be claimed, on account of any loss they may cause to the master.

Subject, however, to these general qualifications, we are ready, for the purpose of the present discussion, to admit that the Planters of Demerara have a vested interest in their slaves, which the legislature is

bound to respect ; and that if, by any of its acts, their property in slaves should be so dealt with as to subject them to pecuniary loss, the general principles of English legislation require that a fair compensation should be awarded to them. This principle, we admit also, has been recognized in the Resolutions of May, 1823. But then its recognition there does **not** imply, as the Petitioners allege, that indemnity should precede, but that it should, as in every other case, accompany or follow, the particular act by which injury may be inflicted. Admitting the slave to be *property*, it is surely enough that he should stand on the same equitable footing with every other species of property which, with a view to the public good, it may be necessary to appropriate to public purposes. If an Act of Parliament, for example, takes from an individual a portion of his land, it insures him a fair indemnity, by judicial appraisement. And, it is on this recognized principle that the Government have proceeded in framing the clause mentioned above, in the Trinidad Order in Council, respecting the manumission of Slaves. In order to prevent this measure of public policy, which the Government and the Parliament have adopted, from being attended with loss to individuals, they have provided, that no man shall be divested of his slave without an equivalent, and have fixed the mode of ascertaining by an impartial appraisement what that equivalent shall be.

It is not easy to conceive any mode by which indemnity could have been more completely secured to the owner than this ; and yet the Demerara Planter bitterly complains of it as unjust. He complains, that is to say, that with a view to a great measure of State policy, his slave, who is his property, may be taken from him without his consent, and even against his consent. This may be hard ; but still it is no more than is done, when any measure of public policy requires it, with respect to all those other descriptions of property to which he himself anxiously assimilates his slave. If one of his houses must be pulled down, or one of his fields taken from him, for some public purpose, he is divested of such property, without his consent, and even against his consent ; and is obliged to accept in return, the price of it, not as estimated by himself, but as estimated by disinterested appraisers, who assign to him the fair marketable value of the article of which he has been so deprived. And the Demerara Planter, who maintains that his slave stands on *the very same* footing with every other species of property, cannot complain that that slave should be dealt with in the same way as his horse, or his house, or his field, which may be required for the public service.

The Demerara Planters, indeed, vehemently maintain that *the pro-*

posed system trenches upon their right of property. But, if the same equitable mode of assessing the loss, and providing an indemnity is pursued in this as in every other instance, in which private considerations are made to give way to public interests, it is not very obvious that they can have any just ground of complaint.

It is due, however, to the Planters of Demerara and Berbice, to consider more particularly the specific objections they make to this measure, and to ascertain how far they are well or ill founded.

These objections are of two kinds :—First, objections which apply to the general policy of any measures for facilitating or quickening the enfranchisement of the slaves ; and secondly, objections which respect the sufficiency of the indemnity which it is proposed to give to the master. We shall consider these in their order.

I. *Objections to the general policy of facilitating manumission.*

1. The first objection of the petitioners to the general policy of adopting the clause in the Trinidad Order on the subject of manumission, is, that it is a departure from that wise and sound maxim, pronounced, they say, to be so by Lord Bathurst, which has enounced, that “ *the condition of the slave is only to be improved through the medium of his master ;*” whereas, in this case, the benefit, if benefit it be, is to be conferred independently of the master and even against his will. Of this pretended maxim, however, both the wisdom and the truth may be justly questioned. That the happiness of the slave is in the *power* of the master, cannot indeed be denied. Possessed of despotic authority the master has it without doubt in his *power* to render the condition of his slave miserable. He has it also in his power, though not in the same degree (for slavery is a very intractable subject) to improve the condition of his slave, and to alleviate its hardships. But the present question refers not so much to the *power*, as to the *will* of the master. And in that view, it may without hesitation be affirmed, that if “ *the condition of the slave is only to be improved through the medium of the master,*” it will never be improved at all. Since the world first began, when have men been known voluntarily to divest themselves of despotic authority, or to abridge their capacity of inflicting pain ? What is there which equally with despotism, corrupts the human heart, and disinclines it to the benevolent work of raising, protecting, and comforting its degraded, impotent, and wretched thralls ? The history of the world, still more the history of slavery in all ages ; and above all the history of West India slavery, furnish one unvarying contradiction to this unfounded maxim.

The conduct of the dominant party in the West Indies, from the moment that slavery was first instituted there to the present hour, is an unequivocal demonstration of its falsehood. Its absolute refutation may be read in the barbarous and sanguinary laws, which from the first have polluted and which still pollute the colonial statute books, (all of them framed by the masters alone ;)—in the cruelties nicknamed *exemplary*, with which it was customary in all the colonies to punish the slightest movement against the master's authority, or the attempt to escape from it ; *—in the furious clamours raised against every effort, however temperate, to reform this nefarious system ;—in the determined resistance shewn to all improvement whenever resistance was deemed safe and practicable, or in the artful evasion of it, when open resistance was hazardous ;—in the reluctance with which any concession to humanity and justice, however small, has at any time been made ;—and in the determined struggle still maintained, to prevent all legislative ameliorations, or, if forced to adopt them in form, to render them wholly inefficient in their spirit and operation. We believe it would be difficult to find a single instance, even of any specious though hollow and worthless semblance of improvement, which has not been forced upon the masters by a higher power, or extorted from them by the fear of that power's authoritative interference. Even in Demerara and Berbice, the only alleviations of slavery introduced there, have emanated directly, not from the masters, but from the States General of Holland.

It were easy to cite numerous authorities in confirmation of this view of the subject. But let one suffice. It is that of Mr. Canning, one of our most distinguished and now most lamented statesmen, who in an admirable speech on the Slave Trade in the year 1799, thus adjured the House of Commons ; “ *Trust not the masters of slaves,*” said this enlightened statesman, “ *in what concerns legislation for slavery. However specious their laws may appear, depend upon it they must be ineffectual in their operation. It is in the nature of things that they should be so.*” “ *There is something in the nature of absolute authority, in the relation between master and slave, which makes despotism, in all cases, and under all circumstances, an incompetent and unsure executor, even of its own provisions in favour of the objects of its power.*” The philosophical truth and accuracy of these sentiments are as unquestionable, as the eloquence with which they are expressed. They irresistibly carry conviction along with them. In them he “being dead, yet speaketh.”

* See Edwards's History, Book IV. Chap. iii. Negro Slavery Tract, No. vi. &c.

It is the more necessary to expose the unsoundness of this vaunted maxim of the Demerara planters, because some such delusive view of the subject may have unhappily been imbibed even by some of our statesmen, who, in opposition to all fact and experience, as well as to all general principle, may have permitted themselves to hope that an improvement in the condition of the slaves is to be effected through the medium of the masters. They ought at length to be aware that by the masters it will never be effected. How it may be effected without them, and even against them, is a question on which we have no objection fully to enter. At present it would lead us away from our purpose. We will only remark that, with respect to the particular measure now under discussion, namely that of securing to the slave a *legal* right to effect his redemption at a fair price, without the consent of his master, it will never, we fear, be conceded by the planters of the British West Indies, and least of all by those of Demerara. It must be made the subject of positive enactment by a superior authority. Thus it was in the Spanish and Portuguese Colonies; and thus it must be in ours, if we would not abandon the single slender hope which it affords of putting an end, at any time however distant, to the evil of Colonial Slavery.

2. A second objection may be thus stated. *In the lowlands of tropical climates, steady labour in the sun is only to be obtained by means of coercion; therefore the cultivation of the West Indies could not possibly be maintained, if the slaves were converted into freemen; as in that case they would not be induced to labour beyond what was required to sustain life.* The authority chiefly adduced by the learned counsel Mr. Adam, in support of this opinion, was that of Major Moody, on whose testimony great stress was laid. Those who wish to see that gentleman's views fully examined and refuted, may consult the Edinburgh Review, No. XC.

The proposition thus enounced, however, is contradicted by experience. The climate of Hindostan lies in the same latitude, and is as oppressively hot as that of our West India Colonies. Yet it does not prevent the natives of that country, who are not slaves, but freemen, from labouring assiduously and steadily, not only in manufactures, but in agriculture also. The inhabitants of even temperate climates do not labour more strenuously in the cultivation of the soil than do the inhabitants of the southern provinces of China. And if it be alleged that there the great density of the population, pressing on the means of subsistence, produces all the effect of physical coer-

cion, yet the same reasoning can neither be applied in the same degree to Hindostan, nor to two other instances which we are about to cite. The first is given to us by Baron Humboldt, and is as follows. Speaking of tropical South America, he says,

“ We observed with a lively interest the great number of scattered houses in the valley inhabited by freed-men. In the Spanish colonies, the institutions and the manners are more favourable to the liberty of the Blacks than in the other European settlements. In all these excursions we were agreeably surprised, not only at the progress of agriculture, but the increase of a free, laborious population accustomed to toil, and too poor to rely on the assistance of slaves. White and Black farmers had every where small separate establishments. Our host, whose father had a revenue of 40,000 piastres, possessing more lands than he could clear, he distributed them in the valley of Aragua* among poor families who chose to apply themselves to the cultivation of cotton. He endeavoured to surround his ample plantations with freemen, who working as they chose either on their own land or in the neighbouring plantations, supplied him with day-labourers at the time of harvest. Nobly occupied on the means best adapted gradually to extinguish the slavery of the Blacks in these colonies, Count Torur flattered himself with the double hope of rendering slaves less necessary to the landholders, and furnishing the freed-men with opportunities of becoming farmers. On departing for Europe, he had parcelled out and let a part of the lands of Cura. Four years after, at his return to America, he found on this spot, finely cultivated in cotton, a little hamlet of thirty or forty houses, which is called Punta Zamuro, and which we afterwards visited with him. The inhabitants of this hamlet are nearly all Mulattoes, Zumboes, or free Blacks. This example of letting out land has been happily followed by other great proprietors. The rent is ten piastres for a vanega of ground, and is paid in money or in cotton. As the small farmers are often in want, they sell their cotton at a very moderate price. They sell it even before the harvest; and the advances thus made by rich neighbours, place the debtor in a state of dependence, which frequently obliges him to offer his services as a labourer. The price of labour is cheaper here than in France. A freeman working as a day-labourer (Peon) is paid in the valleys of Aragua and in the Llanos four or five piastres a month,

* Situated in the province of New Granada, between the latitudes of 4° and 6° North.

not including food, which is very cheap on account of the abundance of meat and vegetables. I love to dwell on these details of colonial industry, because they prove to the inhabitants of Europe, what to the enlightened inhabitants of the colonies has long ceased to be doubtful, that the continent of Spanish America can produce sugar and indigo by free hands, and that the unhappy slaves are capable of becoming peasants, farmers, and landholders."

The second instance is of a still more decisive kind. It refers to the Island of Java, which lies between the latitudes of 6° and 9° South, and which must therefore be one of the hottest countries in the world. In what we are about to state respecting it, we quote the History of that Island by Sir Stamford Raffles. Its population according to him amounts to between four and five millions, (vol. i. p. 65.) of whom only 27,000 are slaves, and these are held by the Europeans and Chinese alone, and are not employed in agriculture, but almost exclusively for domestic purposes. The cultivation of this rich and extensive Island is wholly carried on by a free peasantry who reside in villages, and whose happy condition Sir Stamford seems to delight in describing. (Ib. p. 76 to 82.)

"In the first establishment or formation of a village on new ground, the intended settlers take care to provide themselves with sufficient garden ground round their huts for their stock, and to supply the ordinary wants of their families. The produce of this plantation is the exclusive property of the peasant, and is exempted from contribution or burden; and such is their number and extent that in some regencies they constitute a tenth part of the area of the whole district. The spot surrounding his simple habitation, the cottager considers his peculiar patrimony, and cultivates with peculiar care. He labours to plant and to rear in it those vegetables that may be most useful to his family, and those shrubs and trees which may at once yield him their fruit and their shade; nor does he waste his efforts on a thankless soil. The cottages or the assemblage of huts that compose the village, become thus completely screened from the rays of a scorching sun, and are so buried amid the foliage of a luxuriant vegetation that at a small distance no appearance of a human dwelling can be discovered, and the residence of a numerous society appears only a verdant grove or a clump of evergreens. Nothing can exceed the beauty or the interest which such detached masses of verdure, scattered over the face of the country, and indicating each the abode of a collection of happy peasantry add to scenery otherwise rich."

"Every village forms a community within itself, having each its vil-

lage officers and priest. Here is found that simple form of patriarchal administration, which so forcibly strikes the imagination of the civilized inhabitants of this quarter of the world, and which has so long been the theme of interest and curiosity, to those who have visited the Indian Continent." *Ib.* p. 82.

"The natives of Java are, in general, better clothed than those of Western India." "It is part of the domestic economy that the women of the family should provide the men with the cloths necessary for their apparel, and from the first consort of the Sovereign to the wife of the lowest peasant, the same rule is observed. In every cottage there is a spinning wheel and loom; and in all ranks a man is accustomed to pride himself on the beauty of a cloth woven either by his wife, mistress, or daughter." *Ib.* p. 86.

"The island of Java is a great agricultural country: its soil is the grand source of its wealth. *In its cultivation the inhabitants exert their chief industry*, and upon its produce they rely, not only for their subsistence, but for the articles of foreign luxury or convenience which they purchase. *The Javans are a nation of husbandmen*, and exhibit that simple structure of society incident to such a stage of its progress. To the crop, the mechanic looks immediately for his wages, the soldier for his pay, the magistrate for his salary, the priest for his stipend, and the Government for its tribute. The wealth of a province or village is measured" (not by its slaves, though it is a tropical island, but) "by the extent and fertility of its land, its facilities for rice irrigation, and the number of its buffaloes." *Ib.* p. 106.

Nine-tenths of the population are employed in agriculture. *Ib.* p. 107. Again, "Java is a great agricultural country. It has been considered as the granary of the Eastern Islands." *Ib.* p. 195.

"The sugar cane is extensively cultivated in this island," p. 125, "and may be grown to any extent demanded," p. 212. "There are numerous manufactories for its juice, principally owned by the Chinese, both in the vicinity of Batavia and in Jopara and Pasuruan, and partially in other districts of the Eastern provinces. Previous to the disturbances in Cheribon, sugar likewise was manufactured in that district in considerable quantities, and furnished an important article of export." P. 125. See also p. 176. "Large quantities of Java sugar have been exported to Bombay;" p. 212; and 7000 tons of it were sold in one year to the Americans alone. P. 213.

"The land allotted to each separate cultivator is managed by himself exclusively, and the practice of labouring in common, which is usual

among the inhabitants of the same village, on continental India, is here unknown. Every one, generally speaking, has his own field, his own plough, his own buffaloes or oxen, prepares his farm with his own hand, or the assistance of his family at seed time, and reaps it by the same means at harvest." P. 146.

Sir Stamford Raffles then proceeds to shew how the industry of the Javan cultivators had been repressed by the shameless exactions of the native Governments and the Dutch Company, who "employed all the machinery of despotism to squeeze from the people their utmost mite of contribution, the last dregs of their labour." P. 151.

This system of gross oppression and undefined exaction was put an end to by the British Government. The effect, we are told, exceeded the most sanguine expectations. Sir S. Raffles himself was a pleased spectator of its beneficial tendency, and of the security and satisfaction it universally diffused; promoting the prosperity, improvement, and happiness of the people, increasing the revenue, augmenting the exportable produce, and diminishing crime. If the Dutch Government did but adhere to the same just and wise policy, as it seems they profess to do, the happiest effects, he conceived, would follow. P. 160, &c.

A part, at least, of the following apology, of this truly able and excellent and lamented individual, on behalf of the Javans, will be found to apply with equal force to the charges of the Demerara Planters against the free negro of the West Indies.

"Much has been said of the indolence of the Javans by those who deprived them of all motives for industry. I enter a broad denial of the charge. They are as industrious and laborious as any people could be expected to be in their circumstances of insecurity and oppression, or as any people would be required to be, with their advantages of soil and climate. If they do not labour during the whole day, it is because such persevering toil is unnecessary, or would bring them no additional enjoyments. The best refutation of the charge of indolence is to be found in the extent of their cultivation, the well-dressed appearance of their rice fields, and the abundant supplies of their harvests. They generally rise by day-light. At half-past six they go out to the rice fields, where they employ their buffaloes till ten; when they return home, bathe, and refresh themselves with a meal. During the violent heat of the noon they remain under the shade of their houses or village trees, making baskets, mending their implements of husbandry, or engaged in other necessary avocations, and at about four return to the sawahs (or rice fields) to labour them without buffaloes or other cattle. At six, they

return to their homes, sup, and spend the remainder of their time till the hour of rest, (which is generally between eight and nine,) in little parties for amusement or conversation, when the whole village becomes a scene of quiet content, and pleasure. The same round of toil and relaxation is observed during the season for garden culture, dry field labour, or other employments. Under this system the villagers seem to enjoy a greater degree of happiness than they could derive from those increased means that would result from increased exertion. I can bear testimony to their general cheerfulness, contentedness, and good humour; for having visited their villages at all seasons, and often when least expected, or entirely unknown, I have always found them pleased and satisfied with their lot when engaged at their work, or social and festive in their hours of pleasure." P. 232.

Can it be doubted that the moderate and regular labour of this free peasantry, as described by Sir Stamford Raffles, under which they increase, by his account, very rapidly, is to be infinitely preferred, even with a view to its commercial and political advantages, to the incessant compulsory toil of the Demerara slaves, which is no less rapidly wearing them down and wasting their numbers?

The testimony of Mr. Botham, before the Privy Council in 1789, will furnish a very convenient supplement to that of Sir Stamford Raffles. He is speaking of considerable sugar estates which exist near Batavia. "The proprietor," he says, "is generally a rich Dutchman, who has built on it substantial works. He lets the estate (say of 300 or more acres) to a Chinese, who lives on and superintends it, and who relets it to free men in parcels of 50 or 60 acres, on condition that they shall plant it in canes, for so much for every *pecul* ($133\frac{1}{2}$ avoirdupois) of sugar produced. The superintendant collects people from the adjacent village to take off his crop. One set of taskmen, with their carts and buffaloes, cut the canes, carry them to the mill and grind them; a second set boil them; a third clay and basket them for market, at so much a *pecul*. Thus the renter knows with certainty what every *pecul* will cost him. He has no unnecessary expense; for when the crop is over, the taskmen go home; and for seven months in the year, there only remain on the estate the cane planters preparing the next crop. The price of common labour is from 9*d.* to 10*d.* a day; but the taskmen gain considerably more, not only from extra work, but from being considered artists in their several branches." "The cane is cultivated to the utmost perfection in Batavia. The hoe, almost the only implement of the west, is there scarcely used. The lands are well ploughed by a light plough

with a single buffalo." Much more is added on the culture of the cane and the manufacture of sugar and rum, which the West Indians would do well to study.

Satisfactory, however, as these examples may prove to candid and dispassionate minds, they will probably be objected to by the Demerara Planters, as not bearing a strict analogy to the case of the West Indies. Whatever may be the fact in other parts of the world, and with respect to other races of men, they are disposed to maintain, that the negro race whether slave or free, can only be excited to exertion by coercive means. No industry is to be expected from *them* beyond what may be required for the bare supply of their animal wants. In a climate which renders ease so desirable, and toil so painful, *they* will not be influenced by the motives which, in other cases, stimulate to exertion, and lead to the accumulation of wealth; and will be rather content to live in idleness, looking beyond this for no enjoyments, and aiming at no improvement.

Such is in substance the view which has been taken of this question by the Demerara planters, and which was urged with much force by their leading advocate; it deserves therefore a careful consideration.

3. Let us first consider the question as it respects *the negro in a state of slavery*, and enquire whether there be any motives besides those of coercion, or the cravings of mere animal appetite, which are capable of exciting him to industrious effort.

Here however we think it right to guard against that abuse of terms which, in the West Indian vocabulary, dignifies with the name of industry the labour extracted from the slaves by the cartwhip. Industry implies not a forced but a willing effort; an effort made, not for the purpose merely of escaping the lash, or of satisfying hunger, but for that of attaining some desired and higher good. If therefore we are to estimate the industry of which the negroes are capable, we admit that we must take into account, not their forced services, but their voluntary sacrifices of time and ease, and those voluntary exertions that are called forth by the same moral motives which influence free agents in the other classes of mankind.

In order to refute the position respecting the incurable indolence of the negro, it would be sufficient to cite the facts brought forward, on a variety of occasions, by the West Indians themselves. They tell us, with almost one voice, that the slaves are fully fed and clothed by their masters—a circumstance which, according to the theory we are combating, would take away all motive to labour which was not the result of coercion. And yet they tell us, that, nevertheless, multitudes of them

employ their small pittance of leisure time so industriously, and to such advantage, that they abound in wealth and luxuries. The slaves are restrained by the most severe laws, not only in Demerara and Berbice, but in all the other Colonies, from growing sugar, cotton, coffee, cocoa, or any other exportable produce;* but we are told that they raise, in considerable quantities, for their own benefit, whatever they *dare* to cultivate, such as vegetable provisions, fruit, &c. besides breeding pigs and poultry, with all which they largely supply the Sunday markets. If this statement be true, and it is the statement of the West Indians themselves, then it is obvious that the negroes are susceptible of the force of moral motives; for without this, what could be the inducement for men in a tropical climate, who are exhausted by constant and hard labour to which they are driven by the cart-whip, and who are not compelled (as is asserted) by hunger, or any other physical want, to employ that fragment of leisure, which they might naturally be expected to give to the paramount enjoyment of repose, in raising those quantities of yams, plantains, oranges, pine apples, pigs and poultry, with which they so abundantly supply the markets, and for which they obtain mere superfluities and luxuries in exchange. Abundance of West India testimony has been adduced to prove that such is the case. Hosts of affidavits to that effect have been transmitted from Jamaica, Barbadoes, and even Demerara; and these affidavits are confirmed by Major Moody, who, in one of his elaborate Reports, has endeavoured, with extraordinary ingenuity and perseverance, to prove that the negro will not labour voluntarily, or for wages; and yet, as if he were fated to save his opponents the trouble of demolishing his theories, he brings forward, in the very same Report, a statement of the large property possessed by the twelve or fifteen hundred families of slaves who inhabit Tortola, which was the fruit of their own voluntary industry, during their short intervals of relaxation from their master's service, they also being fed and clothed by their masters. The statement is so curious, and so

* The following is the law of Demerara on this point.—“ All slaves, as well males as females, are prohibited from selling or bartering, *with any one whatever, any produce*—sugar, coffee, cocoa, indigo, rokow, syrup, rum, bottles or flasks, or *any thing else*; being permitted to sell only vegetables and ground provisions, the produce of their gardens, or stock which they are allowed to rear; on pain of being severely flogged on the plantations to which they belong, for the first offence; and for the second to be punished by sentence of the Court, according to the exigency of the case.”

decisive of the very point at issue, that it deserves to be exhibited entire on this occasion.

STATEMENT OF VISIBLE PROPERTY POSSESSED BY THE SLAVES
OF TORTOLA.

	Sterling.
38 Horses at 7 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i> each . . .	£285 0
938 Head of horned cattle, at 5 <i>l.</i> . . .	4690 0
2125 Goats at 10 <i>s.</i>	1002 10
1208 Pigs at 10 <i>s.</i>	604 0
33,120 Poultry at 1 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>	2484 0
23 Boats, at 5 <i>l.</i>	115 0
Fish pots and fishing tackle	123 10
Buildings, chiefly in town	700 0
Furniture, utensils, &c.	4968 0
	<hr/>
	£15,032 0
	<hr/>

“In the above,” it is added, “I have not estimated the disposable portion of esculents and fruits, and of cotton, raised by slaves. They cultivate on their own account, about 1,675 acres of land, which is estimated to yield annually, 3*l.* 10*s.* sterling per acre, in total, 5,862*l.* 10*s.* After supporting themselves, the surplus they dispose of at market, *which amounts to a very considerable sum.* The industrious also possess, in cash, considerable sums. I am fully satisfied they are possessed of capital, arising from the sale of stock and crop, to fully the amount of 5000*l.* sterling.”—*Parliamentary papers of 16th of March, 1825, No. 115, p. 152.*

No one, of course, can be so absurd as to argue, that although the enslaved negroes of Tortola work, thus diligently, without the propelling power of the cart-whip, or the urgency of hunger, in order to obtain luxuries or accumulate wealth, yet that they will not work for the same wealth, if offered them in the shape of wages. It would require something more than the new “philosophy of labour,” of which so much has been heard of late, to convince any man of sense in this country, that if a negro will work industriously, from moral motives, on a Sunday or half Saturday, though subjected to severe, compulsory, and uncompensated toil on all other days, he will not feel the influence of the same motives if presented to him on the days now occupied in his master’s service.

We might be content to end the discussion here, our point being

proved by the West Indians themselves. It may be useful, however, to shew, and particularly in reference to the present question, to what a degree the industry of the enslaved negro may be excited, when, by facilities being granted to manumission, a rational hope is held out to him of obtaining it by his own exertions.

We affirm then, that when facilities have been given them of obtaining their freedom, their voluntary industry has been thereby greatly augmented. In Demerara, indeed, every possible obstacle has been placed in the way of the slave obtaining his liberty. He has had no time allowed him as in other Colonies, all his time being occupied exclusively in his master's service. He has had no provision grounds of his own allotted to him; but, like the horse or the mule of his master, has had his daily food dealt out to him from the stores or the plantain walk of the estate. With such a destitution of all means of accumulating property, the price to be paid for his liberty has been enhanced three or four fold as compared with some other Colonies, by the value his labour acquires from the fertility of the soil he cultivates. Even if his master has desired to emancipate him, the law has obstructed his purpose, and the consent of the Governor, and the Court of Policy has been made indispensable. To the naturally high price of the slave, there has further been superadded an enormous tax, the amount of which must also have been earned by the poor slave before he could achieve his liberty. Such was the state of things in Demerara as respected manumission, prior to 1826. Can we wonder then, that under these circumstances, the whole number of manumissions which had taken place in Demerara, in a population of upwards of 75,000 slaves in the five preceding years, from 1821 to 1825, should have been only 142, (twenty-eight annually) being at the rate of $\frac{1}{28}$ per cent. per annum, or one per cent. in twenty-eight years. And of this small number of manumissions, almost all were owing, not to the industry of the enslaved negro, but to the vices of the free white. They consist chiefly of the enslaved concubines, or of the illicit offspring of enslaved mothers by European fathers. The number of those who have redeemed themselves by the produce of their own industry, and the savings of their own frugality, out of this large mass, appears to have been, at the utmost, eleven or twelve.*

Is it surprising that, under these hopeless, not to say desperate circumstances, the Demerara Planters should have witnessed few or no proofs of industry in the negro slave? What object has he had before

* Parliamentary Papers for 1827, No. 128, p. 25.

him, exhausted with incessant toil for his master's sole benefit, to excite his industry? Freedom seemed placed beyond his reach, and to be, in fact, unattainable. For, even if he should have been able to scrape together the means of purchasing it, at the enormous price it bore, and of paying besides the enormous tax upon it, his master might have refused to grant it; and even if his master should have agreed to give him his liberty, it might have been refused to him by the Court of Policy. It would be the very height of absurdity to affect to expect industry from persons placed under such a constitution of things as this.

Now let us contrast with Demerara, the small colony of Honduras. There, no unnecessary obstacle appears to have been raised to manumissions, excepting what might have arisen from the largeness of the price demanded for it by the cupidity of the individual owner, or from the indolence of the slave himself. No tax is imposed upon it. The slaves, besides being supplied with provisions, are allowed the use of land, and time to cultivate it. Two days in the week, Saturday and Sunday, are wholly given up to them, during which they may employ themselves in any way they may deem most advantageous, not being debarred, as in Demerara, from any of the ordinary sources of profit enjoyed by the whites. They may hire themselves to their own masters, or to any one else who will employ them; or they may cultivate the ground for their own use, or for purposes of sale; or they may rear stock.* And what is the result of these facilities of acquiring property, and of the absence of all factitious impediments to manumission? It is an annual enfranchisement of more than one per cent. of the population. In Demerara, the annual enfranchisement is one in about 2800. In Honduras, it is more than one in 100, being more than twenty-eight times as many in proportion as in Demerara.

There is another remarkable difference between Demerara and Honduras. The manumissions in Demerara are chiefly effected by white fathers, or paramours, and seldom by the labour of the slaves themselves. In Honduras the manumissions are, in many cases, the fruit of the industry and frugality of the manumitted individuals; by means of the one day in the week, exclusive of Sunday, which is appropriated to their own purposes. The value of such a privilege is incalculable. It extinguishes half the difference between a state of slavery and freedom; and yet it is a privilege which, it is to be feared, neither

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 433, of 10th June, 1818, p. 115, &c.

the planters of Demerara nor of the other West India Colonies will be willing to give to their slaves, although both Mr. Canning and Lord Bathurst assured Parliament and the country, that a day in lieu of the Sunday, would be given to them.*

The extraordinary effect produced by the possession, exclusively for their own purposes, of that single day, will be better understood when we look at the prices which, through the industrious employment of it, the slaves of Honduras have been able to give for their freedom, and the enormity of which ought not to be overlooked. One man is stated to have paid 225*l.* for his freedom, another 250*l.* and another 300*l.* One man, continuing a slave himself, buys his wife's freedom for 100*l.*; and another that of a son at the same price. Several women pay for themselves 100*l.* each, and one as much as 200*l.* These prices, however, high as they are, † are brought within the reach of the slaves, simply in consequence of the scope afforded to their industry, by giving them a day in the week besides Sunday. The time allowed even to them, it must be admitted, is scanty enough. Five days of the week are given wholly to the master, and only one to themselves besides Sunday; and yet, other difficulties and discouragements being removed, hope is awakened; and, under its influence, such is the industry and the providence they exercise, that they are enabled not only to aim at great accumulations, but to effect them. Let it be kept in view that, under this better system, manumissions have proceeded with 28 times the rapidity at Honduras as in Demerara. And no one has ventured to allege that this comparative rapidity of manumissions has ever endangered the peace, or marred the prosperity, or aggravated the demoralization of the colony of Honduras.

This view of the subject is abundantly confirmed by what has occurred in Demerara itself since the 1st of January 1826. On that day the new Order in Council came into operation there, and although it did not contain the clause which gives to slaves the right of redeeming themselves at a fair appraisement, and without the consent of the master; yet it took away the power of preventing manumissions which had been enjoyed by the Governor and the Court of Policy, and it entirely abolished those iniquitous taxes and fees which had hitherto

* See Speech of Mr. Canning, Debate of May 15, 1823, p. 31,—and preface to that debate, p. xxxi.

† The above sums are in Honduras currency, the proportion of which to sterling is either about 150*l.* per cent. as in Jamaica, or 200*l.* per cent. as in the other Islands, probably the former.

so greatly enhanced the cost of freedom. Even of these new facilities, limited as they are, the effect has been most remarkable. Between the 1st of January and the 31st of May 1826, a space of only five months, the number of manumissions have amounted to 243, being one hundred more than had been manumitted in the preceding five years.

Let us look at another case, that of Trinidad. In this Island out of a population of about 23,500, 631 manumissions were effected in the five years from 1821 to 1825, being at the rate of 126 annually, or more than $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum, when in Demerara containing 75,000 slaves the rate during the same period was about 28 annually, or 1-28th per cent. per annum, being a rate more than fourteen times as great in Trinidad as in Demerara.

In Trinidad, however, there existed no obstacle to manumission excepting either the unwillingness of the master, in cases where manumission was to be his gift; or the indolence of the slave, when the purchase was to be effected by the fruit of his industry. Of the 631 persons thus emancipated 324 purchased their own freedom at the aggregate cost of 50,434*l.* currency, or an average of 154*l.* 14*s.* currency, or about 70*l.* sterling each. The effort of industry to which these 326 individuals were excited in order to raise this sum, they would have had little or no motive to make, but for the comparative facilities afforded to manumission in this island by the absence of all tax upon it, and for the state of the law which gives to the slave the *right* of redeeming himself and the members of his family.

In Trinidad, however, the slaves labour under some serious disadvantages as compared with the slaves in Honduras. Their labour for their masters is far more destructive of life, and consequently it must be far more adverse to the capacity of voluntary effort. It is so destructive, that in Trinidad the decrease amounts to $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. per annum, while in Honduras it is only $\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. The dreadful mortality of Trinidad is obviously the effect of sugar culture on a soil peculiarly fertile; and it must necessarily tend to that exhaustion of the physical strength which takes away the power as well as lessens the inclination of voluntary exertion. The slaves in Trinidad, moreover, are not fed by the master as in Honduras, except perhaps with a little salt fish. They support themselves by food raised on land allotted to them, and which they have had Sunday, and some additional days in the year, but not a whole day in each week, to cultivate. The slaves in Honduras, besides being fed by the master, have had Sunday and another day in the week for their own purposes. Neither the Sunday however, nor the additional week

days, (the number of which is not stated, but it is supposed to be sixteen) given to the slave in Trinidad, were given him for his own purposes, but to raise the food required for his whole sustentation, which whole sustentation it is in fact the master's duty to provide. His means of accumulation therefore, as compared with the slave in Honduras, have been very greatly abridged; and yet such has been the effect produced, in exciting his industry, by the removal of all other obstructions to manumission, that a sum of about £10,000 currency, a year, has been applied, by slaves in Trinidad, to their own redemption, during each of the years from 1821 to 1825.

These facts, and if we were to go through the whole of the West India islands they might be multiplied, will sufficiently shew, that when, by giving facilities to manumission, the spring of hope is once permitted to operate on the mind of the enslaved negro, such an impulse is given to his industry,—to his voluntary exertion,—as produces almost incredible results.*

4. But the Demerara planters will probably admit that the negro slave will make great exertions for the sake of purchasing his freedom; but that, having obtained it, he will no longer labour for any other object beyond the supply of his animal necessities, but will cease to be industrious, and relapse into absolute indolence. This seems to be what they mean, when they affirm that by giving facilities to manumission the industry of the free negro “will be impaired, he being so averse to labour in the field, that he cannot be induced to work for hire, or to carry on the cultivation of the country in a regular or effectual manner.”

Here it would have been important to know, what actually had been the inducements held out to the free negro, to tempt him to labour for hire in the field; because, unless they have been of a kind equal if not superior to what were presented to him by other and easier employments, the fact that he has not been induced to labour in the field for hire proves nothing against his industry. Nay, it may be a proof of the very contrary. It may be a proof that such are his resources, and such his successful exertions, in other more profitable lines of employment, as to raise him above the necessity of submitting to the coarse and ill-paid drudgery of field labour for hire. Major Moody, who, from the coincidence of his opinions with those of the petitioners, is an

* See Anti-Slavery Reporters, Nos. 19 and 26, for further facts respecting manumission.

unexceptionable witness on this point, states that the wages of field labour in the Virgin Islands vary from about $6\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $13d.$ a day, according to the strength and capacity of the individual. What it may be in Demerara we know not, but the Protector of slaves in Berbice having fixed at a guilder, (equal to $17\frac{1}{2}d.$ sterling,) the hire of a slave for a day, when he works voluntarily for his master, we may regard this as the extent of the inducement which would be held out to the free negro, in that colony and Demerara, for his labour in the field, from morning to night, under a tropical sun. Surely it would not be very creditable to the good sense of the free negro, if he were to submit, on such terms, to the incessant drudgery of field labour, provided easier, and at the same time more gainful, employment was open to him. What should we say of the good sense of any man in England, who should prefer hedging and ditching at $1s.$ a day, to some lighter and pleasanter occupation which should yield him two or three shillings a day? The very supposition is absurd. Before, therefore, the Demerara Planters can urge it as a proof of the want of industry in a free negro that he refuses to labour in the field, for any hire which they may have offered to him, they ought to have shewn that he was not more profitably, as well as pleasantly, employed in some other way.

Moreover, when the planters of Demerara and Berbice state so triumphantly the fact, that, in these colonies, "the free negro cannot be induced to work in the field for hire," they ought to have told us of what materials the 5,500 persons are composed who form the whole of the enfranchised population of both the Colonies. They ought to have told us what proportion of them consists of the female concubines of white men, and what of the offspring of their illicit concubinage; how many of them also are mechanics capable of earning perhaps $5s.$ or $6s.$ a day; how many of them cultivate profitably their own allotments; and how many of them are raised, by their circumstances, or by their exertions in other ways, above the necessity of field labour. They ought also to have told us how many individuals there are among them, capable of field labour, who are reduced to the necessity of resorting to that lowest and most fatiguing and least profitable species of drudgery; and who do not earn more, in some easier and less irksome way, than they could do by labouring, during 10 or 12 hours a day, in a tropical sun, for $1s. 5\frac{1}{2}d.$ Let the enfranchised individuals be specified who, though capable of field labour, yet prefer a state of comparative destitution to working for hire; and then there will be at least some facts to investigate in support of the theory of the petitioners.

But though, among the enfranchised population of Demerara and Berbice, there may be none who will condescend to steady labour in the field, from morning to night, for a guilder a day, yet we have this proof that industry is not absolutely extinct among them; that while 68 white individuals, in the years 1821 to 1825, received relief as paupers, only 28 enfranchised persons received such relief during the same time; the whole white population in the two Colonies being about 3000, and the whole enfranchised population about 5500. The 28 enfranchised persons also, who received relief, were almost exclusively women and children, most probably the deserted and destitute concubines or children of the pauper whites.

But supposing that in Demerara and Berbice, the pecuniary inducements to labour in the field for hire were much more tempting than they can be shewn to be, yet there are several circumstances attending agricultural labour in these Colonies, which could not fail to have had a powerful influence in deterring free persons from engaging in it. The labour of the field was conducted under the whip. And although, in associating himself to the human team so worked, the free negro might have stipulated for the integrity of his skin, yet to have taken his place among them at all would seem to imply that he had bound himself to perform the same tale of labour with them. Without such an understanding, a planter would hardly have admitted among his slaves so pernicious an example, as that of a fellow-labourer pausing on the hoe, or relieving his fatigue by a temporary cessation from his toil. Most unquestionably, the *steady* and continuous labour of the Demerara field slave is what no man would submit to, who was not either impelled by the whip in the field, or liable to be punished by its infliction in case of failing to complete his task. Neither health nor strength could long endure it without sinking; a fact abundantly proved by the waste of human life which is caused by sugar planting in that Colony. The decrease of the whole slave population in Demerara appears to amount to about 2 per cent. per annum. Of the mortality which creates this large decrease, a great proportion is said to take place on the sugar plantations; so that it would probably be found, that the decrease directly caused by field labour on these, was swelled to 4 or 5, or even to 10 per cent. per annum, while in other lines of employment there might even be an increase; which, nevertheless, left an average decrease on the whole to the enormous extent of about 2 per cent. per annum. Now, it is not pretended that any of these slaves are killed outright by the employment of sugar planting, or by the actual inflictions of the cart-whip;

but the truth is, that the exaction of labour being beyond their strength, they are killed off by degrees. They are worn down by the effort to which they are incessantly stimulated; and at length they give way under it. As their strength begins to sink, the excitement of the whip is more needed; and some time may elapse before the person who administers it can satisfy himself, whether the diminished exertion of the slave be the effect of want of power, or of want of will, until at length the breaking frame leaves no room for doubt. Such has been the history of negro life and negro suffering in thousands and thousands of instances. And to such a state, who that was free would voluntarily subject himself? It would be like dooming himself to a lingering death—to death by a kind of mitigated torture. Who, indeed, would voluntarily expose himself to be the sharer, though on better terms, or even the constant spectator, of such a system; to be the witness of all the brutal violence, in language and conduct, on the part of drivers, overseers, managers, &c. which is of its very essence, as hitherto administered?

Reasons enough have now been given to shew, why the freed negroes of Demerara and the other Colonies should decline the inducements (if any were ever offered them, which we greatly doubt) to engage for hire in the labour of the field. But it by no means follows, that they may be therefore justly charged with want of industry. For what are the indications of industry which would be required of any class of men, in any part of the world? Would it not be that they were free from want, that they lived in comfort, and that they accumulated property? Now these tests of industry will be found to exist, generally, among the enfranchised population, not only of Demarara and Berbice, but of all the other West Indian Colonies.

That they are generally placed above want appears from this, that though their number amounts to about 90,000, yet of that number only 227 appear to have received even occasional relief, as paupers, during the years 1821 to 1825, and these chiefly the concubines or children of destitute whites: while, of about 65,000 whites, in the same time, 1675 received relief. The proportion, therefore, of enfranchised persons receiving any kind of aid, as paupers, in the West Indies, is one in nearly 400; whereas the proportion among the whites of the West Indies is about one in forty; and, in England generally, one in twelve or thirteen, in some counties one in eight or nine.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that the enfranchised population of the West Indies are subsisted by their own efforts; and it is no less certain, that they obtain their subsistence without the necessity of resorting

to the lowest and most degrading descriptions of employment. They are placed, in short, by their own unassisted exertions, above the necessity of engaging for hire in daily agricultural labour. In whatever degree they may employ themselves, and employ themselves profitably, in cultivation on their own account, they are not driven to engage for hire in those plantation labours in which the slaves are now exclusively occupied. This fact is not only admitted by the Demerara Planters, but it is made the very ground on which they impute to the free negro a total want of industry. But may it not possibly be a proof of the elevation consequent on freedom, and of the industry rather than the indolence of the enfranchised? They maintain themselves in independence, without submitting to the laborious, fatiguing, degrading, and deathful employment of the slave. And this is the charge against them! And not only do they subsist, but they subsist in comfort; and even accumulate wealth. And this they do, though pressed down by civil and political disabilities of the most discouraging kind; and, although the scope of their industry is narrowed, and its efforts are repressed, by cruel and invidious exclusions and distinctions. It even argues considerable energy and elasticity of character, that they should have at all surmounted the obstacles which have so sternly opposed their progress to comfort and wealth.

If any proof of this statement were wanting, it would be sufficient to cite the uncontradicted details, laid before Parliament, in the last Session, by Lord Harrowby, in the House of Lords, and by Dr. Lushington, in the House of Commons, respecting the state of the enfranchised population of JAMAICA, being nearly a moiety of that of the whole of the British West Indies. Not only was no attempt made to contradict those details, but their truth was admitted by Mr. Pallmer, himself a Jamaica Planter, and who had resided for a considerable time in that island. Uncontradicted admissions to the same effect might be cited from the discussions which have taken place, even in the Assembly of Jamaica, on the claims of the enfranchised inhabitants of that island to be relieved from their civil disabilities.

The Colony of TRINIDAD contains a still larger proportion of enfranchised persons than Jamaica. They outnumber by four to one the whites, and are outnumbered by the slaves in the proportion of only three to two. The whites are 3500, the slaves about 23,000, and the free blacks, and people of colour, upwards of 15,000, some say 17,000. And what is the condition of these last? There is not a single pauper among them, not a single individual receiving aid from public charity.

They live comfortably and independently, and nearly half of the property of the Island is said to be in their hands. There, it is admitted on all hands, that the enfranchised Africans and their descendants have long since emerged from barbarism, have become enlightened, have acquired wealth, are highly respectable in character, and are rapidly advancing in knowledge and refinement. Of these facts his Majesty's Government are fully apprized.

In ST. LUCIA, the enfranchised part of the population is three times the number of the whites, and more than one-fourth of the number of the slave population.* The Governor, General Mainwaring, distinctly states, that there is not a single pauper in this Colony. Mr. Jeremie, the Chief Justice of that Colony, thus expresses himself respecting them: "The emancipated negroes have been taxed with laziness; but scarcely is a road opened, in any part of the country, but the borders are occupied by free settlers." He also combats the objections urged against affording facilities to manumission; some of them the very same with those taken by the Demerara Planters. He argues strenuously for giving to slaves a right of property in land, that when enfranchised they may possess a domicile, and land of their own to till. Much of the imputation on the industry of the free negroes, and of their alleged aversion to agricultural labour, he conceives to arise either from their not being permitted to retain and pay rent for those provision grounds which they had cultivated with care as slaves, or from the great difficulty they experience, in consequence of the prejudice existing against their holding lands, in finding another spot and obtaining a sure title to it, where they may begin cultivation on their own account. The slaves, when manumitted, lose the land which had cost them so much trouble to cultivate. The masters, either from prejudice, or from some strange and unaccountable policy, instead of encouraging them to remain on the estate to which they might thus become attached, and where they would be ready to lend their assistance when wanted, it seems, expel them from it. If, however, they were permitted to continue to hold, when free, paying a small rent for it, the same spot of land they had previously improved, or were encouraged to have another prepared to which they could remove, the ground he conceives for this charge of indolence would be taken away. He thinks it quite unlikely, in that case, that persons so shrewd as slaves are, by habit abstemious and frugal, fond of hoarding their earnings, will become less solicitous

* Papers laid before Parliament in 1825, p. 233.

about money and wealth, when they can devote more time to amassing it, and when they hold it by a safer tenure.

In GRENADA, the enfranchised population is four times the number of the whites, nor is there one pauper among them.

In June 1823, a petition was presented by this class to the Assembly of Grenada affirming their loyalty and general good conduct, the largeness of their contributions to the revenue, and their importance to the defence and security of the Colony. They distinctly stated that they possessed no small portion of the property in the Colony, and that of the capital town in it two thirds actually belonged to them. This petition was submitted to a Committee of the Assembly, and on their report the Assembly resolved "that the free coloured inhabitants of these islands are a respectable, well-behaved, class of the community, and possessed of considerable property in the Colony;" and then followed some further resolutions in favour of their claims, which resolutions however do not appear to have been as yet acted upon.

Now it might, without doubt, be said of the enfranchised negroes of Grenada as of Demerara, that not a single individual among them had ever been known to employ himself in daily agricultural labour in the field for hire; but would it be a fair inference from this fact that their industry had been extinguished, or even impaired, by their manumission? On the contrary, what more satisfactory proof of industry could possibly have been exhibited than the fact that, slaves as they or their parents had recently been, they were now living in comfort and independence, "respectable," "well-behaved," and "possessed of considerable property?" No explanation can possibly be given of this result which does not involve both their capacity and willingness of exertion, and which does not prove that the enfranchised negroes of the West Indies are not wanting in industry. The only fact which is adduced in opposition to this conclusion is, that the free negroes do not work in the field of the plantations for hire; a fact which is admitted, but which is so far from proving a want of industry, that it does not even prove that they do not employ themselves industriously, extensively, and beneficially in agricultural pursuits on their own farms, or in other ways.

But another irresistible proof of the state of comfort in which the enfranchised population of the West Indies are placed, may be found in the rapid increase of their numbers by natural propagation. And this progressive increase is rendered the more remarkable by the circumstance of the progressive decrease of every other class of the commu-

nity, of the whites on the one hand, and of the slaves on the other. Even the Maroons of Jamaica increase rapidly while the slaves around them decrease.

In BERBICE itself the number of enfranchised persons had increased in the five years, 1821 to 1825, from 669 to 835, although in that time there had been only 49 manumissions.* Here we have an increase by births of 117 on 669 in five years, being at the astonishing rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum; while the slaves have been decreasing in Berbice, and still more in Demerara, in which last colony their decrease has been proceeding at the enormous rate of nearly 2 per cent. per annum.

5. Statements similar to this in effect might be multiplied. Every colony in the West Indies would supply materials. And yet in the face of such facts do the Demerara planters take it upon them to tell His Majesty in Council that enfranchisement instead of promoting industry, comfort, civilization and moral improvement, tends on the contrary to generate idleness, profligacy, barbarism and crime. This statement rests on no authority whatever. The point however is so important that we must beg leave, though at the risk of being tedious, to make a few farther observations on the subject.

Proofs that the enfranchised population are not wanting in industry have been already exhibited. Their reputation for *loyalty* at least is untainted. They have never been charged with conduct or with purposes adverse to the public safety. And as to crimes of another description, though it would be too much to expect that among so large a body, and especially a body so very unfavourably circumstanced with respect to the means of education and instruction, criminals should not be found, yet it is confidently believed that the proportion of enfranchised persons, convicted of crimes in the West Indies, is smaller than that of any other class, whether free or enslaved. And for the elucidation of this fact it may be sufficient to refer to the records of the West Indian judicatories generally. We have only found one actual return on this subject among the Parliamentary papers. It is from the Island of Jamaica. The enfranchised inhabitants of that island are considerably more numerous than the whites. And yet by a return from several of its parishes ordered to be printed by the House of Commons, on the 12th July 1815, (No. 478) it appears that the proportion of criminal convictions of whites, and of enfranchised persons, was as 24 of the former to 8 of the latter. We have been assured that the proportions would not be found materially different in the other colonies.

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 53, 9th May, 1826.

As to what respects *general civilization* also, it may be equally demonstrated, that under great and numerous disadvantages, disadvantages imposed upon them by the system of oppression and degradation to which they are forced to submit, they have not only not retrograded since their enfranchisement, but have considerably advanced. Of this the comfort in which they live, the increase of their numbers, their comparative freedom from crime, their peaceable demeanour as subjects, and their accumulation of property, furnish incontestable and conclusive evidence. But in addition to these, the progress of light and knowledge among them, and their thirst for the benefits of education, for themselves and their children, are quite decisive, and do not permit a single doubt to hang upon the question.

And if we contemplate, in this view, the disadvantages and obstacles with which they have had to contend, the credit due to them for having made any advance whatever in civilization is very considerably enhanced. They have been oppressed, degraded, discountenanced and trampled upon. They have been shut out from every office of trust or emolument; from every thing which might stimulate them to acquire knowledge or to cultivate their intellectual powers. They have had the very worst moral examples exhibited to them by the whole body of their superiors, who have been, in fact, the very instruments of poisoning the sources of moral improvement, by seducing their women into a participation of their worst vices, and by thus spreading the taint of profligacy, like a moral leprosy, over the whole face of society.* They have thus been not only habituated to the spectacle, and exposed to the contaminating example of the grossest immoralities from infancy, but their women have been taught to regard a participation in them as the only path to wealth and distinction; as a subject of glory instead of a subject of reproach or shame. They have been deprived of every incentive to honourable conduct, not only by being shut out from all places of trust and emolument, but by being denied every active right of citizenship whatever, having been, for the most part, excluded, until recently, even from giving evidence in Courts of Justice, in cases where whites were concerned. Besides this, until within the last two years, no measures were even begun to be taken by the local governments to furnish them with the means of education, or with moral and religious instruction of any kind. The cultivation of their minds, or of their manners, was not only utterly neglected but actually perverted. They have had no

* See Bryan Edwards, Stewart, Williamson, Bickell, Cooper, &c. &c.

communion with their superiors but that of vice; no control on the part of their rulers but what tended to sink them deep in debasement.

And yet notwithstanding all this, they have been emerging from their original state of incivilization with a progress which has gone beyond all reasonable anticipations. We refer to the living mass for the proof of our position. Many of them will now bear an advantageous comparison, not only in respect of wealth, the fruit of industry, but in respect of their moral qualities, and even of their intellectual acquirements, with multitudes of the whites who condemn them as an inferior race, and who would deem themselves degraded by sitting down with them at the same table.

In confirmation of this view of the subject, besides appealing to the testimonies already adduced, and particularly to Bryan Edwards's *History of the West Indies*, we would refer to Mr. Coleridge, who, in his "Six Months' Tour," (a work which is very far from being, in general, a safe authority,) establishes, in an unequivocal manner, the respectability of the coloured classes; and, above all, to the Commissioners of legal inquiry who have, of late, visited the West Indies,—to Mr. Henry, Mr. Coneys, and Mr. Dwarris. This last mentioned gentleman is, himself, a West Indian, and the proprietor of an estate in Jamaica, and though he has risen superior to some of the prejudices of his fellow Colonists, he has, nevertheless, exhibited sufficient proof of the remaining influence of colonial feeling on his mind, to render him an invaluable witness in such a case as the present. A passage at the close of his third Report will amply confirm our general statements, respecting the growing improvement and civilization of the enfranchised classes, while it will give a striking view of the debasement to which the injustice and pride of the white class have reduced them, and which is rendered not the less striking by the very doubts and fears of Mr. Dwarris.

Mr. Dwarris thus expresses himself:

"The policy and justice of admitting the free people of colour (whose numbers are continually increasing,) to an extension of civil privileges, and, indeed, the title of some among them, to a participation in all political rights, is very clear to a dispassionate observer in this country. But so strong are the prejudices existing in the West Indies, founded chiefly on physical peculiarities of the African race, and so impossible is it to alter the habits and feelings of a people, by merely changing their laws, that, upon this subject, I am quite at a loss what to recommend."*

* It is, at least, unquestionable, that a law which should admit enfranchised persons duly qualified as to property to sit on juries, and to exercise the elective

“ That the *truly respectable, the well-educated, well-principled, and well-conducted, among the coloured inhabitants of these islands*, should be left precisely on the same footing, in respect of civil disabilities, with the newly-emancipated slave, is a condition of society, which, without any violent shock to ancient prepossessions, might, I venture to think, admit of some alleviation.*

“ There are islands, where, from the thinness of the white population, it is already felt to be desirable to admit free persons of colour upon coroner’s juries. There is, in other islands, a manifest indisposition in the white inhabitants to be frequently summoned at the sittings of the Courts; and, indeed, the only objection to the institution or revival of quarter sessions, in Colonies where it was felt to be greatly wanted for the trial of petty offences, was the inconvenience apprehended, by persons engaged in commercial or agricultural pursuits, from being so frequently called upon to attend as jurors. In these inferior Courts, in the first instance, free persons of colour possessing a certain qualification in property, and never having themselves been in the condition of Slavery,† might, it does appear to me, and I state it with submission, be not only unobjectionably, but with very great advantage, admitted to act as jurymen. In process of time,” and why not now? “ I further expect that the white inhabitants will gladly avail themselves of their assistance on all petty juries, reserving to themselves, as possessing the greatest property and consideration in the country,‡ the exclusive privilege of acting upon grand and special juries. For the rest, time, improved feelings in the one class, and continued good conduct in the other, will gradually produce a salutary influence, and be much more efficacious in the result, than any forced changes in favour of a particular class.§ As a matter of natural right, if it were insisted on, *these persons*

franchise might easily be enforced in the Courts of the King; and also that their rights of person and property might be adequately protected by independent judges, named by the Crown.

* There has, therefore, been, according to Mr. Dwarris, a great progression in civilization among the enfranchised class.

† Why should the having been a slave, if a man has, by his own good conduct, attained to freedom, and acquired the property qualifying him for the exercise of its rights, be made a bar to that exercise?

‡ Is this the fact? On the contrary, are not the whites in general mere adventurers, having no stake whatever in the country as compared with the enfranchised class?

§ That is true, as far as objections to matrimonial unions, association, &c. are concerned; these must be left to time; but not so as to the enjoyment of *rights*, and the infliction of *wrongs*:—the one ought to be secured, and the other to be prevented by laws, and that forthwith.

undoubtedly ought to compose half the jury when coloured people are on trial, or have their interests at stake; but were this measure suddenly attempted, I firmly believe, under existing feelings, that no white person would sit with them in the same jury-box. The terms in which their very friends in the Colonies advocate their cause, betray the deep-rooted feelings of repugnance and disgust which too certainly exist."

"In conclusion, I can only repeat my earnest recommendation to this *deserving class*, to continue the same *unimpeachable* demeanour they have hitherto preserved; and my conviction, that they will, in such case, not only establish, incontestably, their fitness for the situations from which they are excluded, but, eventually, conciliate the esteem and confidence of their countrymen, whose prejudices they will have insensibly subdued."

That, however, they never will do, until the law shall have authoritatively spoken on the subject. The West Indian white feels now, and while the legislature shall continue to concede to his absurd and unreasonable prejudices, will continue to feel, the same kind of repulsion to seeing a man of colour placed on the same civil or political level with himself, which, in this country, makes persons of refined habits to shrink from the contact of squalidness and rags.

Now, even Mr. Dwarris, who, with all his liberality, retains some share of Creolian prejudice, does not scruple to assert that the "justice of admitting the free people of colour, whose numbers are continually increasing, to an extension of civil privileges; and indeed the title of some among them to a participation in all political rights," are unquestionable. And he thinks it need not give any very violent shock to ancient prejudices, "that the truly respectable, the well-educated, well-principled, and well-conducted among the coloured inhabitants,"—(for it seems there are such among them) should be released from their present disabilities. He proposes, therefore, that certain classes of the enfranchised should be admitted gradually to certain privileges, but under rather absurd restrictions and limitations. With these remnants of West Indian feeling we have nothing to do at present. Our object is to record the decisive testimony of Mr. Dwarris, not to the alleged progressive decline in civilization of the enfranchised classes, but to their progressive advance in civilization. Nay, of those who have been the longest emancipated, he is so far from stating them to have retrograded, that he says of them, that they are "a deserving class," who have preserved "an unimpeachable demeanour," and who he has no doubt, if tried, "will establish incontestably their fitness for the situa-

tions from which they are now excluded." After all these statements, is it possible to maintain that there is a shadow of ground for the assertion of the Demarara Petitioners, that enfranchised slaves, instead of becoming useful members of the community, would become "a burden to the public, and depraved and unhappy in themselves?"

Upon the whole, it cannot be denied that the enfranchised population of the West Indies rank infinitely higher than the enslaved population, in respectability, in wealth, in intelligence, and in all that goes to constitute the real prosperity of a community. Nor can it be questioned, that if the enslaved population were all elevated, by the same or similar means, to the condition to which the enfranchised population have attained, a great accession of individual happiness and of colonial prosperity would be the inevitable result.

It was well and ably remarked by Lord Chief Justice Best, in a recent address to the Grand Jury of Wiltshire, that a country can then only be said to be prosperous, not when there are a few rich men and the rest are in a state of dependence, but when the mass of the people are in the enjoyment of easy and comfortable circumstances. And this is most obviously the point to which the measure of giving facilities to enfranchisement tends to bring the state of society in the West Indies.

In reply therefore to the allegations of the Petitioners, we affirm, and we think we have proved by the most undeniable testimony, that the manumitted population of the West India Islands, instead of being idle and disorderly, are an industrious and orderly class; that, instead of being contented with a bare subsistence, they vie in the acquisition of comforts and luxuries with the Whites; that, instead of retrograding in wealth, their property has been rapidly accumulating, while that of the Whites, they themselves being witnesses, has been deteriorating; and that, instead of sinking in the scale of civilization, they have been fast advancing in moral and intellectual improvement. If, therefore, they have preferred other occupations to the tilling of the soil, for such hire as has been offered to them, (if indeed any offer of the kind has been made them) it must be because the occupations they have preferred have afforded them a higher profit. And it is surely more rational to refer their choice to this cause, a cause both adequate and undeniable, than to a want of industry, the existence of which is disproved by such a multitude of circumstances as have been here detailed.

6. A farther ground of objection to the policy of facilitating manumission, has been drawn from *the agricultural code which was*

promulgated in Hayti in the course of the last year. On this code the learned Counsel Mr. Adam, dwelt at considerable length as proving, beyond dispute, all for which his clients contended, as to the incurable indolence of the enfranchised negro, and the impossibility of obtaining from him any productive labour without severe coercion.

In order to sustain, in the slightest degree, this view of the Haytian Code, those who have adopted it, have been under the necessity of resorting to a mistranslation of one of the terms which occur in it; and on this mistranslation, in point of fact, does their whole argument rest. They have laboured, for obvious reasons, to discover if possible the existence of the driving system in that code, and in order to this they have adopted the clumsy expedient of rendering the French word "Conducteur," into the English word "Driver;" whereas all who know any thing of the French language, know that the term for what we call a "Driver" is not "Conducteur," but "Commandeur;" the word "Conducteur" as applied to *men* answering to the English term "Foreman."

A mere term, after all, proves nothing. In the English Islands, the "Driver" has various essential attributes of which the "Conducteur" in Hayti is wholly divested. This last has in the first place no driving instrument; he is without his cart-whip, that execrable engine of exaction and oppression, that "base, cruel, debasing instrument of torture," to use the energetic expressions of Mr. Barret, a planter of Jamaica, in a speech made last year in the Assembly of that island, "the fellow of the rack and the thumb screw"—for the abolition of which "every heart that is not callous pants," the lacerations of which, he tells us are inflicted "at the pleasure of an individual, at his sole command, as caprice or passion dictates" sometimes by whites of the lowest order; sometimes by one slave (the Driver) "*at his discretion* on another slave."

Nor let it be supposed that the absence or presence of the cart-whip constitutes a trivial difference. It is most vital. For what has been the main cause why negro life has been wasting, and still is wasting, with a fearful rapidity, in our slave colonies? It has been the presence of the cart-whip, in the hands of the driver.—And what has been the main cause that, in the last twenty-two years, while the British slave population has been mouldering away, the negro population of Hayti has more than doubled its numbers? It has been the absence of that torturing impulse. This single fact may satisfy us,

and will satisfy every statesman as well as philanthropist, of the infinite distance there is between our West India system, and the system prevailing in Hayti;—that the population of Hayti is rapidly increasing, while that of our slave and sugar colonies continues, from year to year, and from day to day, to diminish.

The Learned Counsel dwelt on the extreme severity of the Haytian Code; and yet all its severities put together do not equal the cruelty, barbarity, and reckless despotism of a single clause (the 37th) in the very latest specimen of Colonial Reform, given us by the Legislature of Jamaica, in their meliorating Act of December 1826; a clause too, which, as if in mockery of the wretched slave, professes to be framed “in order to restrain his arbitrary punishment.” These are its terms.

“AND IN ORDER TO RESTRAIN ARBITRARY PUNISHMENTS, be it further enacted, that no slave, on any plantation or settlement, or in any of the workhouses or gaols in this island, shall receive ANY MORE than TEN LASHES at one time and for one offence, unless the owner, attorney, guardian, executor, administrator, or overseer, of such plantation or settlement, having such slave in his care, or keeper of such workhouse, or keeper of such gaol shall be present; and that no such owner, attorney, guardian, executor, administrator, or overseer, workhouse-keeper, or gaol-keeper, shall, on any account, punish a slave with more than THIRTY-NINE LASHES at one time and for one offence, nor inflict, nor suffer to be inflicted, such last-mentioned punishment, nor any other number of lashes on the same day, nor until the delinquent has recovered from the effect of any former punishment, under a penalty not less than ten pounds, nor more than twenty pounds, for every offence,” &c.—Such is the law passed, by the enlightened Legislature of Jamaica, in December, 1826, and which is applicable to every slave, man, woman, or child in that island. By that law the *driver* may inflict ten lashes;—and the owner and overseer, nay, the gaol-keeper and workhouse-keeper, the attorney, guardian, and administrator may, each and every one of them, inflict thirty-nine lashes on the bare posteriors of any and every slave, man, woman, or child in the island, without a trial, without the order of a magistrate, for no defined offence, but merely because he (the owner, &c.) is offended; nor can he, *by any law*, be called to answer for such conduct. Nay, the clause is framed for the express purpose of protecting him against all responsibility for so doing.

Now, what are the severities of the Haytian Code, which can for one

moment be compared to this savage enactment? Its worst severities are directed against idleness and vagrancy; against those who have no visible means of subsistence; and even these worst severities are but a mitigated imitation of the English law on the same subject. We refer in proof of this to the Code itself, which is inserted entire in the 23d No. of the Anti-Slavery Reporter, in which will also be found the corresponding regulations, as given by Judge Blackstone, of that English law, which, the learned commentator tells us, “abhors and will not endure the existence of Slavery within this nation.” The regulations will be found in his first book, p. 424 to 427 of the 11th edition. The following brief extracts from it will suffice for the present purpose.

“*All single men between twelve years old and sixty, and married ones under thirty years of age, and all single women between twelve and forty, not having any visible livelihood, are compellable, by two Justices, to go out to service in HUSBANDRY, or certain specific trades, for the promotion of honest industry; and no master can put away his servant, or servant leave his master, after being so retained, either before or at the end of his term, without a quarter’s warning, unless upon reasonable cause, to be allowed by a Justice of the Peace; but they may part by consent, or make a special bargain.*” Again: “A third species of servants are *labourers*, who are only hired by the day or the week, and do not live *intra mania*, as part of the family; concerning whom the statutes before cited, (5 Eliz. c. 4. and 6 Geo. III. c. 26,) have made many *VERY GOOD regulations*: 1, *Directing that all persons who have no visible effects may be COMPELLED to work*: 2, *Defining HOW LONG they must continue at work in summer and in winter*: 3, *Punishing such as leave or desert their work*: 4, *Empowering the Justices at Sessions, or the Sheriff of the county to settle their wages*: and, 5, *Inflicting penalties on such as either give or exact more wages than are so settled.*”

It cannot be shewn that there is a single regulation in the Haytian Code more severe than this. Above all, there is not to be found in it a licence for any arbitrary punishment whatever, by either proprietor, manager, overseer, or “conducteur.” The law, and the law alone, fixes both crime and punishment; and the penalties in no case consist of the flagellation either of men or women. That coarse, revolting, and demoralizing species of arbitrary infliction, which universally pervades our Slave Colonies, and to which they all cling with extraordinary tenacity, even in the case of the delicate female frame, is in Hayti wholly unknown. The provisions of the Haytian Code also extend

alike to the master and to the labourer, both being alike the objects of its protecting and its restraining power; nor is a particle of discretion as to punishment conceded to the master, beyond what is enjoyed by his meanest labourer. Indeed, the rights and comforts of this last class seem to have been watched over with peculiar care. The Haytian, even if reduced to the necessity of agricultural labour, may choose his employment and his employer. He may engage for a shorter or a longer time, as suits his convenience. He may contract to receive a fourth part, or a half, of all the produce he raises; and in the first of these cases, which is the most frequent, he is not only lodged, but fed, on the plantation, from the produce of his own labour, not during his own time, but during five days in the week which alone he has contracted to give to his employer. Observe the force of the regulation on this point, Art. 36. “On every rural establishment they” (*viz.* the proprietors or renters) “shall be bound to cultivate *provisions, &c. sufficient for the sustenance of the persons employed there.*” This is to be the first care. (Article 19.) The labourer for a fourth is also to be furnished, gratuitously, with all his tools, (Article 62.) and with medical attendance and medicine, (Article 67.) and has the benefit, without any diminution of his share of the produce, of all the cattle and machinery on the estate, and of the expense of its management, (Articles 51, 65, and 66.) And, possessing all these advantages, he receives, besides, his fair share of the fourth part of the gross produce raised by him and his fellow labourers, (Article 52.) The proprietor is further bound to furnish the labourer with land for his own use, to be cultivated by himself, and for himself, during his frequently recurring holidays, his Sundays, and his regular day in the week of rest from plantation labour, (Art. 38, 39.) On five days of the week he works for his employer and himself in common: he has his full subsistence from the labour of these days, besides his share of all marketable produce grown on the plantation. And he has, moreover, land, and abundant time in the week for its cultivation, whereby to increase his comforts or to add to his capital. Such also is the consideration which the law bestows on the formation and promotion of industrious habits, by their only effectual spring, a sense of self-interest, that even the infirm, and the children of early age, while fed by the provisions of the plantation, are encouraged to exertion, by shares of all the other produce of it, proportioned to the efforts, however feeble, which they are able to make. And even the women who have contracted to labour, for a term of years, in return for their provisions and their share of the other produce, are not de-

prived of the benefit of this contract, by the incapacities of a pregnant state, but, though relieved on that account, for a time, from their share of the labour, are still allowed to share in the proceeds of that labour.

Every Haytian parent, too, though himself attached to agriculture, has it in his power to send his children to town to be educated, or to be taught a profession or trade, on his simple request to a Justice of the Peace (Art. 5.); a regulation which of itself seems to secure the moral and intellectual progress of this people.

But the grand security of Haytian freedom and happiness is to be found in the absence of all those invidious distinctions, arising from the colour of the skin as being the livery of slavery, which proves the curse of the African and his descendants in our slave colonies. In the Haytian Courts of Justice, the evidence of no man or woman whatever is precluded. There, all, of all ranks, stand on an equal footing; and this circumstance, when superadded to the absence of the cartwhip, and to the substitution, for its stimulus, of self-interest as the spring of effort, makes a difference in the two states of being so large as scarcely to admit of calculation or comparison.

The public has been amused of late with theories respecting the effect of the smell, colour, hair, features and other peculiarities of the negro race, in preventing them from rising in the scale of civilized society. To Hayti these theories can have no application. The peculiarities to which such powerful effects have been assigned, are there the common inheritance of high and low, rich and poor. The governors and the governed, the framers of the laws and the meanest subjects of them, are of the same flesh and blood, and smell and colour. That corporeal degradation and intellectual debasement, which mark the condition of the negro slave, are not, in Hayti, as in our colonies, the adjunct either of a black skin or a negro descent. The chain which, in the latter, binds the negro to the earth, in the former is broken; and the lowest Haytian has the same prospect of seeing his son rise to distinction in his native island, as the meanest British parent has of seeing his descendant attain to eminence in the various walks of life in this great and civilized empire.

Mr. Adam indeed strongly objected to the Haytian system as servile and despotic, because the police of the plantations was chiefly administered by the military authorities. The truth is, however, that the situation of the Island requiring a military force for the preservation of its independence, and the ablest and most intelligent persons in the island being enrolled in the army, such an arrangement was recommended both

by its economy, the same machinery serving a double purpose; and by its expediency, the reponsibility of military men, and their habits of regularity being such as to afford a better security, than in present circumstances could otherwise be obtained, against either neglect of duty or abuse of power. But whatever be the evils of that arrangement, they affect equally the proprietor and the peasant, who are both alike subject to the inspection of these responsible superintendants. And there is this undeniable proof of its working well—that while the negro population of our colonies has in the same period been rapidly diminishing, the negro population of Hayti has, since 1804, more than doubled its numbers.

7. The Memorialists further object that *the proposed measure will produce complete and speedy ruin to the Colonies.*

This is obviously the language of passion and exaggeration and not of reason. Is it not a sufficient reply to such an argument to refer to the experience of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, where still greater facilities, than those now objected to, have long being given to manumission, and on terms also far more favourable to the slave and less advantageous to the master? What proof of ruin do those colonies exhibit? Nay what proof of ruin does Trinidad exhibit, as compared with any other of our slave colonies, although manumissions, in the very mode now proposed, have been multiplying there, until the number of the enfranchised is approaching to that of the enslaved population?

The apprehended ruin is to arise, we presume, from the diminution of the number of labourers on an estate, caused by the increase of manumissions. A diminution however of these labourers has long been taking place in Demerara, attended with far less advantageous circumstances, but of which the Memorialists have made no complaint as tending to their ruin;—we mean the diminution of the slave population by mortality; a diminution too, for which, unlike that occasioned by manumission, no indemnity can be claimed.

Let us suppose that, during the six years from 1818 to 1824, manumissions had taken place in Demerara, under the operation of some such law as is now objected to, to the amount of 8,574 slaves; for whose redemption an average price of £90 sterling (being about the average price of the Marshal's sales) had been paid, making a sum, on the whole, of £771,660. In this case, the capital of the Demerara planters might be somewhat changed in its nature, but it would not be diminished in its amount. The owners of the emancipated slaves, if they could not replace them from the numerous sales of the Marshal which take place in that colony, or from other sources, would still have the value of the

emancipated slaves as a source of income. Even if slaves were so scarce that none were to be procured but at a high price, this would be no disadvantage to him who received, for his enfranchised slave, the full market value whatever that might be.

The fact, however, differs very widely from the supposition here made. The slave population indeed has not been diminished to the extent supposed, by *manumission*, during the years 1818 to 1824—but, during those years, it has been diminished to that extent, to the extent that is to say of 8,574 individuals, by the excess of deaths over births.* And this excess of mortality therefore has actually occasioned a loss to the Demerara planters of about £771,660, for which they can obviously claim no indemnity whatever. It is somewhat strange then that these gentlemen should complain so vehemently of what they call the *compulsory* manumissions of the British government, though it provides a full indemnity for each; and yet should make no complaint of the far more extensive manumissions, also *compulsory*, effected by that unceremonious and irresistible emancipator, *Death*; who however gives himself no trouble in appraising the value of those whom he enfranchises, or in compensating the owner for his loss.

Now let us only suppose another possible case; (one indeed we grieve to say, which is wholly contrary to the fact;) that the mild administration of Slavery, of which the Demerara planters boast so loudly, had spared that waste of life which the six years in question have witnessed; but that the numbers of their slaves had still been diminished to the same extent, though not by *death*, yet by *manumission*; would they in that case have had any cause to complain of ruin? They would have been richer by £771,660 than they now are; while humanity would have had more in which to rejoice, and less over which to mourn.

The apprehensions of ruin, from the measures in question, may still be *professed* by the planters of Demerara and Berbice, but surely they cannot be seriously entertained by any rational being.

8. The Memorialists express their fear lest the proposed measure should “*endanger the lives of the white inhabitants of Demerara and Berbice.*”

What but the blindness and unreasonableness of prejudice can account for such a groundless fear? What instance can be adduced of danger to the public peace from the most liberal extension of the right of redemption to slaves? What danger has ever followed the

* See Anti-Slavery Reporters, Nos. 19 and 26, and the Parliamentary documents there referred to.

very measure so strongly deprecated? It has always been the law of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, and yet the internal peace of those colonies has been more stable than that of any others; nay to this very law have they been indebted for their security. Experience therefore is decidedly opposed to this objection. Even in Trinidad, although the enfranchised part of the community have had much to complain of in the conduct of the whites; and though in number they exceed the whites in the proportion of five to one, yet in 1816, and afterwards in 1823, while every other colony in the West Indies was agitated by alarms, in Trinidad they enjoyed a state of perfect tranquillity. The colonies which experienced any real agitation, were the very two colonies where hindrances to manumission had been multiplied with the most jealous care, Barbadoes and Demerara.

In Barbadoes, the tax on manumissions had been raised to 200*l.* on men, and 300*l.* on women. In Demerara, not only were heavy imposts arbitrarily imposed on each act of manumission as it occurred, by the Governor and Court of Policy, but without *their* formal licence, no slave could be manumitted at all. An owner was actually deprived of the power of giving freedom to his slave, without the consent of the Court of Policy, lest he should thereby endanger the public peace. In this single opprobrious fact we see the proof and also the cause of the absurd prejudice, and of the idle and unfounded alarms, which prevail in Demerara respecting manumission. The law has strengthened the prejudice, and the prejudice has increased the alarm.—The Demerara law is remarkable. It enacts, that “As the power of granting manumissions to slaves, is solely vested in the Governor and Court of Policy, all acts and deeds of whatsoever nature, executed by unauthorized individuals, and pretending to convey the right of freedom to slaves, are illegal, and the same are hereby declared to be null and void, and of no effect whatever; and any person who shall presume to infringe this sole and undoubted power, by granting or executing a release from servitude to any slave, &c., shall be subjected to a fine of 1000 guilders.”

Can any thing be conceived more monstrous than such a law? And it is the members of the very Court that framed it, who pretend to instruct the King's Privy Council, and the Ministers of the Crown, in sound views of policy. We may dismiss this futile objection without any further observation. It is wholly unsupported by facts; it is contrary to all experience; and it is clearly and decidedly opposed to every sound principle of general policy.

9. Still more unfounded, if possible, are the anticipations of *moral evil* which the Demerara Planters deduce from the increased facility of enfranchisement. The moral benefits of Slavery, and the moral evils of freedom, are topics reserved for the Planters of Demerara and Berbice, and for the new school of moral and political philosophy which some of their friends have laboured so assiduously to establish for their advantage.* Their newborn solícitudes for the interests of morality, are, however, somewhat suspicious, especially when we call to mind the entire absence, for so many years, of all attempts on their part to improve the moral condition of their slaves; their marked dislike of religious instruction; their utter neglect of the institution of marriage; and the universal concubinage of all classes which has been substituted for it.

The Demerara Planters not only profess to think that Slavery is more favourable to the improvement of the moral character than freedom; (their avowed plan being to keep their slaves, slaves still, for the very purpose of improving their moral character, and thus fitting them for freedom) but they seem to hold that even the hope of obtaining freedom, though by a long course of industry and frugality, is pregnant with moral mischiefs. To state the proposition would be to refute it, even if our whole experience of the effect of enfranchisement, not only in the West Indies, but in all parts of the world, did not force upon us an opposite conclusion. It may be affirmed that there is no instance, in history, of a body of slaves, remaining in slavery, being raised in morals and civilization to a level with freemen. The change has either been effected, as in England, by giving ready facilities to individual manumission; or as in Hayti, by a revolutionary convulsion; or as in Lithuania, by a decree of the State, at once conferring freedom on the whole body of the slaves.

The Memorialists profess to have at heart the objects of civilizing the slave, and of improving his mind and morals, as introductory to emancipation. This sounds well, but it is a mere delusion. The objects they thus propose to effect we believe to be utterly unattainable, except by some general legislative measure of emancipation, or by some plan, like what they now so vehemently resist, which places a slave's enfranchisement within the reach of his own exertions.

10. The zeal of the Memorialists, in the cause of morality, is further evinced by their objecting to the slave's right of redemption, on account

* See the writings of Major Moody and Mr. M'Donnel, some articles in the Quarterly Review, &c. &c.

of its tendency to encourage the prostitution of the enslaved females to white men. Unfortunately, however, for this argument, the prostitution of female slaves already exists to the full demand of the white population. And, as for the "check to illicit connexion, which" it is most untruly asserted, "at present subsists, in the dread of bringing into existence an offspring whose lot is Slavery," we do not believe that such a consideration has had the very slightest effect, as a "check," on the licentiousness of the whites; licentiousness being, with very rare exceptions universal among them. And if it really possessed any force, it must operate in a still greater degree against marriage with slaves.

The Court of Policy must have felt the extreme ridiculousness of such an argument as this, and they must have relied for its effect on the utter ignorance prevailing in the Privy Council of the real state of West Indian society. Could they have named a single individual on whom this alleged check had operated?

11. The Memorialists further object to the proposed plan, as *tending to diminish the number of voluntary and gratuitous manumissions*. Such manumissions, however, proceed, for the most part from considerations which are not likely to be permanently affected by the slave's possessing a right of self-redemption. A keeper will still be equally desirous, as he now is, of enfranchising his concubine, or a father his child, or a master a faithful and attached servant, if neither the concubine, the child, or the servant, should have the *power* as well as the *right* of self-redemption. If the proposed plan, indeed, by bringing additional purchasers into the market, should raise the market value of a slave, it will, of course, add to the master's reluctance to part with him. But voluntary manumissions, if they proceed to the same extent with redemptions by the slave himself, must equally affect the value of slaves generally, and tend equally in this way to abate the rapidity of manumissions. With their usual inconclusiveness of reasoning, however, the Memorialists seem to imagine, that though the system of self-redemption will liberate a smaller number of slaves than the system of voluntary manumission, yet that it will produce a greater effect in enhancing their market value!

12. The plan of self-redemption, we are further told, *offers a premium to idleness, and must produce discontent; for it affixes a higher price to the industrious than to the idle and profligate*.

It offers, however, a far higher premium to industry and frugality, than it does to idleness and waste. The industrious and well-behaved may indeed expect to pay a high price for their

freedom; but the idle and dissolute must know that they have no chance of obtaining it all. An industrious slave will sooner raise 120*l.* for his redemption, than an idle slave will raise 20*l.* Undoubtedly it is a hardship on any man that he should have to pay for his good conduct, and some consideration ought to be given by Government to this subject. Still the most deserving slaves will, under the operation of the proposed plan, be much better off than heretofore, and therefore can hardly be discontented with so favourable a change in their lot. The objections, on this account, to the measure, fade into nothing, when that is compared with the existing system, and with its stern exclusion of the slave from all hope of freedom by his own exertions.

13. The proposed plan, we are further told, would be *an encouragement to theft on the part of the slave, in order to acquire the means of effecting his enfranchisement.*

This, however, has not been found to be the case in the colonies where the largest facilities have been given to manumission; as in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, and in Trinidad. If facts of this kind could have been produced, they would not have been kept back: our ears would have been stunned with them. Besides, is there no police in the West Indies? Do thefts meet with impunity there? And if they do not, is it to be apprehended that those negroes, who seriously set themselves to obtain their freedom, will risk all their past progress, and all their future hopes, by the commission of felony? Such are not, in general, the men who commit felonies.

14. *The slave, it is also argued, will be obliged to deny himself comforts in order to accumulate his price. He will thus have acquired habits of parsimony, but not habits of enjoyment, and to these last alone can we trust for correcting his natural indolence.*

In opposition to this dogma of the new "philosophy of labour," we maintain that habits of industry, frugality, and providence, are far more to be trusted for correcting the slave's disposition to indolence, and for raising him in the scale of civilization, than habits of enjoyment, as they are called, which are in fact habits of prodigality. The real prosperity of the individual, as well as of the state, can only arise from accumulation, which is also the true path, politically speaking, to solid enjoyment, in the case of black as well as white.

15. A further objection to the proposed plan, is, that *the young and able, and especially young females, will be redeemed, while the old and infirm will be left.*

If, however, the compensation is adequate, this can be no injury to the planter, who will be able to purchase other young persons with the money. The market price must always accurately measure the real loss to the planter. It cannot be alleged that slaves are not to be bought in Demerara. During the five years from 1821 to 1825, there were sold in that colony, by the marshal alone, 2,705 slaves. The man who had received the full and fair value of a slave, would surely have no difficulty in replacing him, if he went to a sale with the money which he had just received for him in his hand.

16. *The security of the mortgagee, it is further asserted, will be lessened, if not destroyed by this plan.*

This plan, however, neither lessens nor destroys the security of the mortgagee. It only substitutes one security, and that a more stable one, for another. It tends indeed to increase, instead of to lessen, the value of the security arising from property in slaves; because it admits into the market fresh parties as purchasers, which must inevitably raise the market price of slaves, and therefore be in favour of the security.

17. *The plan is dangerous by the excitement it will produce among the slaves.*

This objection has been already answered under a former head. But are there no other dangers to be apprehended than those which proceed from a hope in the slaves of being able to redeem themselves? Is there then no danger in shutting out all such hope?

18. *The proposed plan is likewise objected to as discouraging taskwork.*

If, however, the use of the whip in the field be effectually and practically abolished, as the Memorialists take credit to themselves for having done, it is so obviously their interest to adopt taskwork, that no fears need be entertained on that point. Accordingly, Sir Ralph Woodford tells us that, in Trinidad, since the abolition of the driving whip, "Taskwork is becoming general."—Besides, if the compensation awarded to the master, in the appraised value of his slave, be, as has been shewn, an adequate compensation, why should the master discourage taskwork, especially if that method affords to the slave, as is asserted, the means of sooner accumulating his price? In that case we can conceive no motive but pure spite against freedom which should lead to such a result.

Our fear with respect to taskwork is of a very different description from that expressed by the Memorialists; it is the imminent danger that the tasks will be excessive. Let it be remembered that the master is

constituted the sole judge of the quantum of labour to be required from the slave, under the penalty of such corporal punishment as the master may inflict. Let it be remembered also that there is not, in the West Indies as in the United States, an obvious and easy method of checking the tendency in the master to undue exaction. Multitudes of the agricultural labourers in the United States are white. It would be too gross and palpable a violation of justice, to be often attempted, that tasks should be imposed on the black man, which the white man of equal strength, labouring on the same or an adjoining plantation was unable to execute. This circumstance it is which, in America has made taskwork such a benefit to the slave, that, notwithstanding his slavery, he multiplies his numbers rapidly. If we could discover any such natural check to undue exaction in the West Indies, we should entertain fewer apprehensions of the abuse of taskwork to purposes of oppression ; but in the existing state of things there, it is impossible to contemplate the subject without earnestly hoping that the Government would turn its anxious attention to the means of guarding against the evils which may arise from that system, recommended as it undoubtedly is by many considerations, but yet liable as it also is to the most serious abuses.

19. Lastly, the proposed plan is objected to because, *by the emancipation of the slaves, the West India colonies will cease to be of any value to Great Britain.*

At present it must be admitted that the value of these colonies, as to what respects the slaves belonging to them, is now constantly deteriorating, and tends gradually to annihilation. Their rapid decrease by *death*, cannot be made the subject of indemnity. But supposing them to decrease, however rapidly, by *manumission*, their value will in that case be refunded to the master, and to the empire, by the hand of the slaves themselves ; who, by the very process, will also have become an increasing population of active and industrious freemen, each of them of far greater value, in a national point of view, than when he remained in bondage. Can any one doubt for a single moment, that, whether as the creators of wealth, or as the consumers of merchandize, the 35,000 enfranchised individuals of Jamaica, and the 15,000 of Trinidad, are not at this moment of more importance to the mother country, (and if the disabilities under which they labour were removed, would not become infinitely more important still) than twice or thrice the number of miserable slaves ? What country in the world has ever lost ground by the exchange of slavery for freedom, especially when brought about by the tranquil operation of legal facilities afforded to its acquisition ?

We have now gone through the whole of the objections made by the Planters of Demerara and Berbice to the general policy of the proposed plan for facilitating manumission. We have done this in order to expose their fallacy, although we might have fairly declined to enter upon the subject at all. The *policy* of the measure is no longer a point *sub judice*, having been already decided upon, not only by His Majesty's Government, but by the unanimous voice of Parliament, who have stamped with their entire approbation those very principles of policy to which the Memorialists so strenuously object. Indeed, without adhering to this course of policy, as Lord Bathurst himself has justly remarked, "no system of measures would satisfy the feelings of the country, or execute the purposes of Parliament." To recede from it also would be to violate every pledge which has been given to the country both by the Crown and by the legislature, who have solemnly announced it as their determination that the slave shall have the right of redeeming himself or his family; and that the master shall be bound to receive, in lieu of the persons so redeemed, their fairly appraised value. The planters of Demerara and Berbice, however, deny that the appraised value of the slave is an adequate indemnity to the master; and this denial raises the only question which, in fact, is now really open for discussion. The question of policy has been already decided, and there can be no hope of changing that decision.*

II. We come now therefore to the second main point which, at setting out, (see p. 13) we proposed to consider, namely, *the alleged insufficiency of the indemnity proposed to be given to the Master for the manumission of his slave*. And this which is in truth, the only point really at issue, need not occupy us long, for it lies in a narrow compass.

The Memorialists allege that the market value of the slave will not indemnify the master for the loss of that slave's labour; and they fortify this view of the subject by referring to a statement of Lord Bathurst in an *Instruction* to the Governor of Demerara, in which after intimating that he considers the master entitled to have the loss he may sustain by the act of manumission fairly estimated with a view to his adequate compensation, he adds, "But if in the process of time it should unfortunately be found that the slaves, thus manumitted, altogether abandon

* We say nothing at present, though much might be said, on the impolicy of trifling with the hopes and fears of the slaves, and of the danger to the masters of arraying themselves against the universal wish of the nation, as well as against the excited expectations of the slave population. Such conduct seems like absolute infatuation.

their owners, and refuse to work as free persons, the owner not having the means to supply the loss of his slaves, and not being able to engage any free labourers for his *sugar plantations*, the price, which must *then* be assigned to the loss of each slave, must have a direct reference to that state in which the plantation will be placed by the progressive reduction of the means of conducting it."

It might have been easily foreseen that a statement so vaguely and obscurely expressed, on a subject also which so very deeply affected the prejudices and feelings of the West India planters, would have been liable to misconstruction. On that account its appearance in such a form is greatly to be deplored.

At the same time, it must be admitted, that Lord Bathurst has been very unfairly dealt with by the West Indians. They have represented him as maintaining that the value of the slave is not to be estimated by the market price, but by a calculation both of the present and prospective gain which the master may make of him. If this indeed were his Lordship's meaning, nothing could have been said in his defence, as such a mode of valuation would be both impracticable in itself, and unfair and iniquitous towards the slaves. The market price can be the only sure criterion of the value of the slave, and must always measure with sufficient accuracy the average gains of the master. And this, it now appears, was the precise and deliberate view of the case taken by his Lordship. For the construction to which we have adverted having been recently reduced to practice in Trinidad, in a case to which we shall presently refer, his Lordship, in a letter to Sir Ralph Woodford, dated Oct. 30, 1826, has explained his real meaning, which the parties, he says, proceeding "on an entire misapprehension and misapplication of the instruction by which they profess to have been guided, had wholly misconstrued." That instruction, he states, was not at all intended to affect present existing valuations, but to refer to a state wholly future, prospective and contingent, and which, even in that remote and, at most, possible event, was applicable to no slaves but those engaged in "the field labour of *sugar plantations*." "Generally speaking," his Lordship adds, "*the market price of slaves is the fairest criterion of their value, and it is that by which appraisers should principally regulate their valuations.**" The various considerations mentioned in my des-

* It is not obvious on what ground it is that his Lordship introduces the qualifying phrases, "generally" "principally." We can perceive no adequate reasons for such qualifications.

patch were not brought forward to supersede this criterion, but as those which *might progressively* affect the market price, and thereby make the fixing *now* a uniform price objectionable. 'By the term market price, it is not intended to refer to special sales which may have taken place under special circumstances, but to *that price for which a slave bona fide equivalent could be purchased at the time of the appraisement*, and in that case, whether the proprietor receives an actual substitution of an equivalent slave, or a sum of money, for which, at his option, an equivalent slave can be equally procured, his interests are equally preserved. Even on the supposition that no equivalent slave could be procured, the principle of appraisement would in no degree be changed. The price of the manumission in that case would be a sum which would be either an equivalent for the increased expense which the Proprietor would incur from employing a free person, in services in which it is known by experience that free people can be employed; or as a compensation, whatever may be the loss of the slave's labour in those services for which it may be found that free labour will not be available; or in those for which free labour may be only partially or inadequately substituted.'"*

Little need be added with a view of supporting this unanswerable reasoning of his Lordship. Conceding, for the sake of the argument, the Planter's right to complete indemnity, we would remark, that it is perfectly obvious, that if free labour could be obtained at the same expense and with the same profit as slave labour, no compensation whatever will be due to the Planter for the liberation of his slaves. If, on the contrary, free labour were not obtainable at all, an equitable compensation would include the value of such property as would be made valueless by his emancipation. Between these extremes there is a variety of gradations, for which it would be difficult previously to provide. But the market price of the slave, and that alone, solves the difficulty. And if, in the progress of emancipation, the Planters find it impossible to obtain free labour at all, the market price of the slaves must rise, so as to cover even the value of the estate, so far as that may be unaffected by other extrinsic circumstances. But, on the other hand, in proportion as it becomes more easy to obtain free labour, must the price of slaves decrease in the market, till at last it may fall to nothing.

* What are those kinds of employment for which free labour may not be made available?

It is obvious, therefore, that the market price of slaves is the only just criterion by which the completeness of the indemnity to the owner can be measured; and the moment we admit of a departure from this criterion, we open a door for the grossest injustice and oppression. It is by this rule that the valuation of an English Jury, sworn to decide justly between litigant parties, is guided; and it is by the same rule that, in the West Indies, the sworn appraisers ought to be guided in their estimate of the slave's value. They cannot, indeed, depart from this rule on either side of the Atlantic, without incurring the guilt of gross injustice, if not of perjury.

A most striking illustration of the view now given of this subject has just been furnished in Trinidad, and has appeared in papers recently laid before Parliament by his Majesty's command. (Part II. 1827.)

Pamela Monro, a female slave, eighteen years of age, whose mother was desirous of manumitting her, was ordered to be appraised in the usual way, by two appraisers, Thomas Le Gendre and William H. Burnley. These appraisers, not attending simply to the plain terms of the oath they had taken, but having recourse to sophistical inferences from the misinterpreted instruction of Lord Bathurst, declare their judgment to be, that "*Pamela Monro is fully worth the sum of 1200 Mexican dollars perfect, (viz. 260*l.* sterling), and they do place that value upon her.*" That is to say, instead of giving, according to the tenor of the law, the fair and real value of this young woman in the market, which might be about 80*l.* or 85*l.* sterling, they form an imaginary and constructive valuation, which amounts to more than three times her fair and real value; a decision which has of course doomed the wretched Pamela to remain a slave.

The Protector of Slaves, Mr. Gloster, having been applied to on this occasion, has stated, that the appraisement of this poor girl far exceeded any other since the promulgation of the Order in Council. The very highest appraisement of any slave, even of the most valuable class, had been 169*l.*, and he was a head boiler, and a tolerable mason, carpenter, and blacksmith, whom his owner considered it impossible to replace. Another slave, who acted as a store-keeper and out-door collecting clerk, and who was, in every respect, a confidential servant, had been sold for 162*l.* 10*s.* sterling. Four head drivers had been also appraised, all very intelligent and confidential persons; one of them, capable of conducting a Cocoa Estate, at 150*l.* sterling; another at 140*l.*; another at 120*l.*; and a fourth (*whom his former master at*

this very time employs as an overseer for daily wages) at 97l. 10s. sterling.

The observations of the Protector of Slaves on this whole transaction are invaluable; and they amply confirm our views of the subject, while they prove the utter fallacy of those advanced by the Memorialists and their learned Counsel. They are as follows:

“The appraised value of slaves manumitted, under the provisions of the Order in Council, for the first eighteen months after it came into operation, does not average much more than one-half of the general average for the last twelve months.”—(That is to say, since the above quoted and unhappily misconstrued despatch of Lord Bathurst became public.) “The selling or market price of slaves, however, has not experienced a commensurate rise; and therefore it is evident, that the magnitude of the appraisements *lately made* are not occasioned by the increased value of slaves.

“While the market price of slaves continues as at present, I would consider the application of other principles of appraisement to any common case, as *an injustice to the slave, and an encroachment on the rights conferred upon him by the law.*

“To my apprehension, *the only fair criterion by which the value of a slave can be ascertained, is the usual market price*; and although that price has risen considerably within the last twelve months, the criterion afforded by it is far exceeded by the generality of appraisements.

“It is also certain that the market price will rise in proportion to the decrease of the number of, or difficulty of procuring, *plantation slaves*. It is, therefore, *UNJUST to add to the real value, or market price, of the slave purchasing his freedom, a portion of the value of the estate to which the slave is attached, until it becomes impracticable to continue the cultivation of the estate, in consequence of the impossibility of procuring a substitute for the slave who is to be enfranchised.**

“The opposite opinions are very generally diffused, and, however controvertible they may be by argument, *I cannot indulge even the hope that they will be easily eradicated, or prevented from operating very seriously to the disadvantage of the slaves desirous of becoming free.*”

* And not even then, for even in that case the market price would still be the criterion of value.

“The principle,” (which principle was assumed and avowed by the appraisers of Pamela Monro) “that the value of the slave should be estimated at the amount of the capital required to yield a revenue equal to the hire which could be obtained for the slave, is evidently fallacious, from the fact that, every day, instances occur of slaves being bought for four hundred dollars,” (a third of the appraised value of Pamela Monro) “who, as Mr. Burnley mentions,” (of Pamela) “may be immediately hired at the rate of six dollars, or 1*l.* 6*s.* sterling per month, fed, clothed, and the capital guaranteed; the corresponding capital to which, at six per cent., (the ordinary rate of interest in Trinidad) is 1200 dollars, or 260*l.* sterling, the appraised value of Pamela Monro. Yet surely, it could not be pretended that the latter sum was the real value of a slave that was bought for one third of the sum, (400 dollars) and that could not be resold at an advanced price. This, I submit, *PROVES that the market price is the only just and fair criterion for determining the value of a slave.*”

This luminous and convincing exposition of the case is highly creditable to its author, Mr. Gloster; and the more so, because, being himself a West Indian, he was likely to be powerfully influenced by opinions which he states to be so widely diffused around him, and so interwoven with the interests and the prejudices of his brethren.

So undeniably just and reasonable in itself is the proposed method of ascertaining the indemnity due to the planter for the loss of his slave, that it is precisely the method which has been prescribed, by every legislature in the West Indies, whenever a slave is taken from his master for any public purpose, or is executed, or banished for a criminal offence. The value, in such case, is assessed by a Jury according to the fair market price. Had Pamela Monro, instead of being a claimant for freedom, been condemned to the gallows, she would have been equally lost to her owner; but in that case, would Messrs. Le Gendre and Burnléy, or any other appraisers, have awarded to him, on their oaths, 1,200 Mexican dollars, as her fair and just appraisement?

On the whole, we think it has been clearly demonstrated, that the allegations and complaints of the Memorialists have no just foundation; that the prayer founded upon them ought not to be listened to; and that His Majesty's Government are bound, not only by their own pledges, but by the most forcible reasons of state policy, as well as of humanity and justice, to persevere in their proposed plan of manumission.

It no less clearly appears, however, from what has passed in Trinidad, that even the binding solemnity of an oath, may not secure, in the execution of that plan, a fair measure of justice to the slave; and that if the Government and Parliament wish to fulfil their pledges, steps must forthwith be taken to obviate the effects of such open and deliberate deviations from fairness and impartiality. And if even the sanctions interposed, in such a case as this, are unequal to resist the influence of that sympathy, which the holders of slaves feel in favour of the master, and against the slave; how can the Government and the Parliament continue to entrust to the conscience and feeling of such men, the more difficult and delicate and complicated task of legislating for their wretched dependants? Do not such transactions as these, as well as such petitions and memorials as we have been considering, add irresistible force to the conclusion at which the country at large has long since arrived—that “It would be the height of fatuity to continue to look for any useful reforms from the masters of slaves. The work must be undertaken and executed by the British Parliament. They alone are competent to the task. And in no other way can the slightest hope be entertained, either of effectually mitigating the rigours of colonial bondage, or of finally abolishing that opprobrious state of society.”

Notwithstanding the pains we have taken to confute the objections of the Memorialists to the proposed plan of Manumission, *it is necessary we should guard against being considered as acquiescing in the justice of the principle of the measure itself.* We deem it, indeed, an infinite improvement on the former system. But the obligation to indemnify the planter, for the liberation of his slaves, does not justly attach to *them*; but to the public in common with the planter. Indeed, if there be any one of the parties more clearly entitled to indemnity than another, it is the slave himself, who, by the present arrangement, has this injury added to all his other wrongs, that he is condemned to pay the penalty of the criminal conduct of his oppressors.

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A

SHORT REVIEW

OF THE

SLAVE TRADE

AND SLAVERY,

WITH

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE BENEFIT

WHICH WOULD ARISE FROM CULTIVATING

TROPICAL PRODUCTIONS

BY

FREE LABOUR.

BIRMINGHAM:

BEILBY, KNOTT, AND BEILBY.

1827.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following pages were compiled about the close of the year 1825. Since that period the State of Slavery in our Colonies has again been brought under discussion in Parliament; but nothing which has since occurred, either there or elsewhere, has tended in the smallest degree to weaken, in the minds of many Friends to the Abolition of Slavery, the settled conviction they before entertained of the paramount importance of that view of the question which it is the main object of the present publication to elucidate. Although some of the observations which follow may have a more particular reference to the above period, yet it is believed that the greater part will be equally applicable to the present.

Birmingham, Feb. 1827.

REVIEW, &c.

IT is the object of the following compilation to present at one view to those persons whose thoughts have never been much directed to the subject, a sketch of the nature and extent of the Slave Trade, and of the evils inseparable from the condition of Slavery; to point out the failure of all the efforts hitherto made to abolish the one or mitigate the other, and to draw the public attention to a principle, by the gradual but certain operation of which, it is believed, they may both be yet undermined and overthrown. When the vast mass of physical and moral evil which Slavery has caused, and is still causing, has been briefly brought before the reader, it is hoped that an anxious desire will be produced for its abolition; and an ample and interesting field of enquiry will then be open to him as to the means best calculated for effecting it.

Humanity has hitherto done little, notwithstanding her strenuous and persevering efforts, towards accomplishing her purposes of mercy, and we may now reasonably ask, whether her means of success are not to be found in the co-operation of motives and interests, not yet sufficiently regarded in reference to the present subject, but which, if employed in her service, would essentially contribute to secure the triumph of her cause.

As the History, Nature, and Consequences of Slavery, prove it to be incompatible with the prosperity of those who maintain it; and eloquently illustrate the position "That it is the interest of every man to do right," it is hoped that these pages will make it apparent to all unprejudiced minds, that not mercy and justice alone, but every dictate of common sense, and every principle of sound policy, require its destruction.

May no one close the following statement without a sense of his individual responsibility on this deeply momentous subject. Let each faithfully examine what are the means within his own power of absolving himself from a participation in the crime of his country, and of contributing to remove the stain of its guilt. Those means, however insufficient alone to effect so vast an object, are yet the means most important to *him*; being all that to him are delegated—all for which he is answerable.—They cannot be well employed and effect nothing: if rightly used they will, at least, produce a return of peace to his own bosom, whilst their neglect may be followed by bitter remorse. Let no man under-rate his capabilities, or overlook his resources, in a cause which so authoritatively demands a faithful examination into the powers with which he is invested. Let him diligently investigate his possessions of money, talent, influence: and pause, solemnly pause, before he pronounce, that *he can do nothing* for his afflicted Brethren in Bondage.

NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE SLAVE TRADE.

THE SLAVE TRADE commenced very soon after the discovery of America.

So early as the year 1503, a few Negro Slaves had been sent into the New World. In 1511 Ferdinand the Fifth permitted them to be carried in greater numbers. After his death, Bartholomew de Las Casas, the Bishop of Chiafra, made a proposal to Cardinal Ximenes for the establishment of a regular system of commerce in the persons of the native Africans. The Cardinal refused to accede to this proposal; but after his death, Charles the Fifth granted a patent to one of his Flemish favourites containing an exclusive right of importing four thousand Negroes into America. The favourite sold his patent to some Genoese merchants, and they were the first who brought into a regular form that commerce for slaves between Africa and America which has since been carried to such amazing extent. The first importation of Slaves from Africa by our Countrymen was in the reign of Elizabeth, in the year 1562. England soon engaged deeply in the traffic: and in 1713 obtained a monopoly of the trade for supplying Spanish America with Slaves!* The other maritime nations of Europe also continued to extend it, and it is worthy of remark, that *most*, if not all, the

* See Robertson's History of America and Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

European States, with the exception of Portugal, in first recognizing by legal sanction this inhuman traffic, evinced a consciousness that they were trampling upon rights which the power they possessed gave them no title to invade. Their sense of its injustice proves that however habit may reconcile the human mind to an existing evil, even interest could not at first bribe it to contemplate so iniquitous a system without a lively perception of its real nature.

From that period the Trade continued to increase, and gradually arrived at an extent so dreadful, that, for a number of years, from sixty to one hundred thousand human beings are estimated to have been annually torn from their country and transplanted to the European Settlements in America.

In proceeding to investigate the nature of this Traffic, it will first become our business to enquire by what methods Slaves are obtained upon the African coast.

One of these is by a species of warfare, called *Tegria*, which, in the African language, means robbery, and consists of expeditions, without any previous notice or declaration, for the purpose of plunder. It is this sort of warfare which chiefly supplies the slave-market. These *Tegria* are of greater or less extent, according to circumstances. They are conducted by men heading parties of five hundred horsemen, down to the single individual armed with his bow and arrows, who, concealing himself amidst the bushes, waits till some young or unarmed person passes by; then, tiger-like, he springs upon his prey, rushes with it into the woods, and, when night falls, carries him off for a slave.

“ Wars of this description,” says Mr. Park, “ are generally conducted with great secrecy. A few resolute individuals, headed by some person of enterprise and courage, march quietly through the woods, surprise in the night some unprotected village, and carry off the inhabitants and their effects, before their neighbours can come to their assistance. One morning, during my stay at Kamalia, we were all much

alarmed by a party of this kind. The king of Foolado's son, with five hundred horsemen, passed secretly through the woods, a little to the southward of Kamalia, and on the morning following plundered three towns belonging to Madigai, a powerful chief in Jalonkadoo.

“ The success of this expedition encouraged the governor of Bangassi, a town in Foolado, to make a second inroad upon another part of the same country. Having assembled about two hundred of his people, he passed the river Kokoro in the night, and carried off a great number of prisoners. Several of the inhabitants who had escaped these attacks, were afterwards seized by the Mandingoes, as they wandered about in the woods, or concealed themselves in the glens and strong places of the mountains. These plundering expeditions always produce speedy retaliation; and when large parties cannot be collected for this purpose, a few friends will combine together and advance into the enemies' country, with a view to plunder and carry off the inhabitants. By these means hereditary quarrels are excited and perpetuated between nations, tribes, villages, and even single families, in consequence of the powerful temptation which the slave-market opens to the inhabitants to gratify their revenge with a momentary profit.”

The *Slave Trade*, on the other hand, is conducted both up the rivers and upon the coast, by the whites themselves. The natives see their ships; they know that they come loaded with articles adapted to their wants, and for the purpose of receiving men, women, and children in exchange. Here lies the temptation. Here are the means before their eyes of immediately gratifying their desires. No sooner do their vessels drop their anchor, than lust, avarice, enmity, revenge, and all the bad passions which agitate the human breast, are brought forth into action. The news of the arrival of a slave-ship, is like the publication of a reward for every species of crime. From that moment few are safe. A witness examined by the English Parliament, deposed that

the natives dared not stir out of their houses at these times without their arms. He asked one of them the reason why he armed himself when there was no war. The man's answer, though silent, was expressive. He pointed his finger to a slave-ship which was then lying in the roads. And here it may be proper to remark, that the European traders never ask any questions, whether the slaves they buy have been fairly or unfairly obtained. Some of them boldly and frankly acknowledged, before the same Parliament, that they bought all sorts of persons, without paying the least regard to the manner in which they had been made slaves, or without considering the right of the seller to dispose of them. "If the natives," said they, "will sell them, we will buy them."

But happy had it been for thousands of Africans, if the stream of this trade had been left to take only its own natural course, or if the European traders had not given it an undue impulse by an application of the most criminal powers; but alas! what must we not expect from persons who leave their own country to tear the innocent inhabitants from another into a dreadful slavery, for their own profit! Is it likely that they would be over-scrupulous in the means of obtaining their object? The fact justifies the supposition, as we shall soon show. It is well known that all barbarous nations have an excessive love for spirituous liquors, and that this love grows with indulgence, till it becomes an invincible habit. Here, then, we meet with acts of the most criminal interference on the part of the European traders. Well acquainted with this unhappy infirmity on the part of the natives, they have lost no opportunity of profiting by it. They have given feasts to the chieftains, and when they have made them drunk, they have procured orders from them for military incursions against their own subjects. They are found also to have had recourse to other means equally base and fatal. They have sown the seeds of discord between the chieftains of neighbouring states though living in amity with

each other; and where they have found disputes already existing between them, they have blown the embers into a flame, well knowing, that whoever were the conquerors, the war would terminate in their own favour. To enable the two parties to avenge each other, they have supplied both of them, upon trust, with arms and ammunition. They have then become calm spectators of the conflict, and as soon as it was over, they have repaid themselves by receiving the prisoners on both sides. But this is not all. When men become once familiarized with vice, who knows were they will stop? When the moral principle is gone, what is to check them? The European traders have had even the audacity to steal the natives themselves, when they have been able to do it without being discovered, or without the fear of retaliation. How many solitary canoes have been seized, both in the rivers and upon the coast, and the people on board of them taken out and carried off to the regions of slavery!*

The atrocious crimes and dreadful miseries which attend this wide-spreading system of desolation, will be further illustrated by the following extracts. The first forms part of a letter from a person residing at Senegal, to his correspondent at Paris, dated St. Louis, Senegal, August 20, 1818.

“ If you knew all the infamous transactions,” says he, “ or rather, all the crimes which the thirst of gold produces in this country, you would scarcely credit such atrocities. White men, officers of the government, have been seen causing the blacks to be hunted even in the streets of St. Louis; that is to say, causing blacks, either slave or free, to be seized and carried off to the coast, where a ship was in waiting for them. In one instance, a black having been kidnapped in this manner, the next day his mother hastened to offer a sum of money for his liberation. The honest white took the money, and two days after both mother and son were shipped off for America. The latter, indignant at the out-

* Clarkson's *Cries of Africa*, p. 3, 9.

rage, stabbed himself, saying, ‘Thou white man: devourer of blacks! I cannot revenge myself upon thee but by depriving thee of my person.’”—This transaction has occurred subsequently to the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

Extract from *Observations on the Slave Trade*, by the Abbé Giudicelly, formerly resident at Senegal and Goree. Printed at Paris in 1820.

“The following, sir, are a few particulars of the massacre at the village of Diaman. The desire of obtaining information led me to the house of a native, a neighbour of mine, who had bought a woman of twenty years of age, that had been lately captured. I learned from her, that not being able to flee, in consequence of wounds on her feet, she had been made a slave by the Moors; that her husband had been out hunting for eight days, her eldest daughter had been rescued by her grandmother; that her father had died in the defence of the village, and that the Moors, at the time of capturing her, had stabbed her infant of five months old, which she had in her arms.

“This poor woman was much distressed at my inquiries, and it was with difficulty that I prevailed on her to accept of some little relief. I was obliged to tell her repeatedly, but perhaps without convincing her, that all white people were not like those who had treated her with so much barbarity; and that the greater part of them detested such horrid cruelty. ‘Why, then,’ she inquired with much earnestness, bursting into tears, ‘why, then, do they not prevent it?’

“The destruction of the village of Diaman was the signal of the most dreadful atrocities, such as I should not have dared to suspect that even cannibals could be guilty of. On the Senegal, in the streets of the colony, as well as in the surrounding country, every black who was a stranger and unprotected, was arrested, sold, and carried on board a ship. How often has my ear been assailed by the cries of these poor wretches, when, in the night, they were struggling against their persecutors.

“ In the beginning of the year 1818, King Damel encamped with about three thousand men, cavalry and infantry, and one thousand Moors, at the village of Gandiol, about three leagues from St. Louis. I went to see this barbarian, who for six months had been travelling to the different parts of his kingdom, carrying desolation, fire, and slaughter. To whom has he sold his subjects, whom he has enslaved by thousands? They have all been sent away to America, from the Senegal or Goree.”

But if these things are so, how is it possible that the natives upon the coast can be industrious, or that they can advance in the scale of civilization. Mr. Bryan Edwards, the celebrated author of the history of Jamaica, though he set his face against the abolition of the Slave Trade, being himself a planter, had yet the candour to allow, that the greater part of the continent of Africa was “ a field of war and desolation; a forest where the inhabitants were wolves to one another; a scene of fraud, rapine, oppression, and blood.” This information he said he collected from his own negroes, who had been taken from it. What a melancholy picture does this account, which is in conformity with our preceding representations, afford us! And how much more disgusting is it rendered by the reflection, that all the atrocities which we discover in it, were occasioned by people who *call themselves Christians!!*

From sixty to one hundred thousand human beings are in this manner torn annually from their country, their families, and friends, transplanted to a distant country, and destined to toil as beasts of burden for the advantage of others, they and their posterity for ever! If the unhappy Africans are human beings; if they have passions similar to our own; if they feel and think like ourselves, they have a claim upon our deepest sympathy. When we hear the cries of an animal which suffers, we cannot refrain from pity; we find in our breast an impulse which tells us, that there is some analogy between its pains and our own; and can we

see such an accumulation of misery brought upon an innocent and unoffending people, without taking an interest in their sufferings, or without advocating their cause?

The European traders, conscious of their own guilt, conscious, indeed, that the voice of nature would cry out against their crimes, have prepared themselves long ago with arguments in their defence. Conscious that nothing else would justify their conduct, they have given out, and continue to give out, that the Africans are creatures of another species; that they have not the faculties and feelings of men; that they are upon a level with brutes; and add, by way of confirmation of their assertions, that though some centuries have passed since Africa was discovered, its inhabitants have made no progress in civilization like other people.

There will be no difficulty in refuting this argument, if we appeal to disinterested travellers, or to any travellers of reputation, who have visited the continent in question. And first, let us enquire whether the Africans have any moral character.

“The fierce disposition of the Feloops,” says Mr. Park, “is counterbalanced by many good qualities. They display the utmost *gratitude and affection* towards their benefactors; and the *fidelity* with which they preserve whatever is entrusted to them, is *remarkable*.”

“One of the first lessons in which the Mandingo women instruct their children, is the practice of truth. The reader will probably recollect the case of the unhappy mother, whose son was murdered by the Moorish banditti at Funingkedy. Her only consolation in her uttermost distress, was the reflection, that the poor boy, in the course of his blameless life, *had never told a lie*.”

“It is remarkable, that an African pardons more easily a beating, than an injury spoken against his parents.—‘Wound me, but curse not my mother,’ is a very common expression among them.”

With respect to the sympathies of nature, or their affec-

tionate fondness for one another, let us hear what Mr. Park says also on this subject. "About two o'clock we came in sight of Jumba, the native town of the blacksmith (the negro who had travelled with Mr. Park), from whence he had been absent more than four years. When we arrived at the blacksmith's place of residence, we dismounted and fired our muskets. The meeting between him and his relations was very tender; for these rude children of nature, free from restraint, display their emotions in the strongest and most expressive manner. Amidst these transports, the blacksmith's aged mother was led forth, leaning upon a staff. Every one made way for her, and she stretched out her hand to bid her son welcome. Being totally blind, she stroked his hands, arms, and face with great care, and seemed highly delighted that her latter days were blessed by his return, and that her ears once more heard the music of his voice. From this interview I was fully convinced, that *whatever difference there is between the Negro and European in the conformation of the nose and the colour of the skin, there is none in the genuine sympathies and characteristic feelings of our common nature.*"

Take the following as instances of their hospitality, or of their tenderness for strangers in distress. "Towards evening," says Mr. Park, "as I was sitting down, chewing straws (this was in the kingdom of Kajaaga), an old female slave passing by with a basket upon her head, asked me if I had got my dinner? As I thought she only laughed at me, I gave her no answer; but my boy, who was sitting close by, answered for me, and told her that the king's people had robbed me of all my money. On hearing this, the good old woman, with a look of unaffected benevolence, immediately took the basket from her head, and showing me that it contained ground nuts, asked me if I could eat them. Being answered in the affirmative, she presented me with a few handfuls, and walked away before I had time to thank her for this seasonable supply. This trifling circumstance gave me

particular satisfaction. I reflected with pleasure on the conduct of this poor untutored slave, who, without examining into my character or circumstances, listened implicitly to the dictates of her own heart. Experience had taught her that hunger was painful, and her own distresses made her commiserate those of others."

On another occasion, when Mr. Park was near Sego, he speaks thus—"I was obliged to sit all day without victuals, in the shade of a tree; and the night threatened to be very uncomfortable, for the wind rose, and there was great appearance of a heavy rain; and the wild beasts are so very numerous in the neighbourhood, that I should have been under the necessity of climbing up the tree and resting among the branches. About sunset, however, as I was preparing to pass the night in this manner, and had turned my horse loose, that he might graze at liberty, a woman returning from the field stopped to observe me, and perceiving that I was weary and dejected, inquired into my situation, which I briefly explained to her; whereupon, with looks of great compassion, she took up my saddle and bridle, and told me to follow her. Having conducted me into her hut, she lighted up a lamp, spread a mat on the floor, and told me I might remain there for the night. Finding that I was very hungry, she said that she would procure me something to eat. She accordingly went out, and returned in a short time with a very fine fish, which having caused to be half broiled upon some embers, she gave me for supper. The rights of hospitality being thus performed towards a stranger in distress, my worthy benefactress (pointing to the mat, and telling me I might sleep there without fear) called to the female part of her family, who had stood gazing on me all the while in fixed astonishment, to resume their task of spinning cotton, in which they continued to employ themselves great part of the night. They lightened their labour by songs, one of which was composed extempore, for I was myself the subject of it. It was sung by one of the young women, the rest joining in

a sort of chorus. The tune was sweet and plaintive, and the words literally translated were these: ‘ The winds roared and the rains fell: the poor white man, faint and weary, came and sat under our tree: he has no mother to bring him milk, no wife to grind his corn. Chorus, Let us pity the white man; no mother has he, &c. &c.’ Trifling as this recital may appear to the reader, to a person in my situation the circumstance was affecting in the highest degree. I was oppressed by such unexpected kindness, and sleep fled from my eyes. In the morning I presented my compassionate landlady with two of the four brass buttons which remained on my waistcoat, the only recompence I could make her.”

Having said thus much on the *moral* character of the Africans, we shall now inquire if they have an *intellectual* one.

Mr. Park says, that “ in every considerable town, there is a chief magistrate (among the Mandingoes), called the *alkaid*, whose office is hereditary, and whose business it is to preserve order, to levy duties on travellers, and to preside at all conferences in the exercise of local jurisdiction and the administration of justice. These courts are composed of the elders of the town, and are termed *palavers*; and their proceedings are conducted in the open air with sufficient solemnity. Both sides of the question are freely canvassed, witnesses are publicly examined, and the decisions which follow generally meet with the approbation of the surrounding audience.”

In speaking of Sego, he says, “ that it contained about thirty thousand inhabitants. The view of this extensive city, the numerous canoes upon the river, the crowded population, and the cultivated state of the surrounding country, formed altogether a prospect of civilization and magnificence, which I little expected to find in the bosom of Africa.”

“ As the arts of weaving, dying, sewing, &c. may be easily acquired, those who exercise them are not considered, in Africa, as following any particular profession, for almost every slave can weave, and every boy can sew. The only ar-

tists which are distinctly acknowledged as such by the negroes, and who value themselves on exercising peculiar trades, are the manufacturers of leather and iron. The first of these are called *karrankeas*. They are to be found in almost every town, and they frequently travel through the country in the exercise of their calling. They tan and dress leather with very great expedition. They convert the hides of bullocks chiefly into sandals, and the skins of sheep and goats into quivers, and into sheaths for swords and knives, and into belts, pockets, and a variety of ornaments. These skins are commonly dyed of a red or yellow colour.

“ The manufacturers in iron are not so numerous as the *karrankeas*, but they appear to have studied their business with equal diligence.

“ Most of the African blacksmiths are acquainted also with the method of smelting gold. They are able also to draw the gold into wire, and to form it into a variety of ornaments, some of which are executed with a great deal of taste and ingenuity.”

It will not be necessary to make any other extracts from Mr. Park, or to appeal to the Book of Evidence printed by order of the English Parliament (which is in the most perfect unison with the statements of Mr. Park), to refute the wicked argument of the European traders, that the Africans are creatures of another species. We have shown that they are grateful to their benefactors; that they are faithful to their employers; that they are lovers of truth; that they possess all the amiable sympathies of our nature; that they are capable of conducting civil government; that they possess cities crowded with commerce and surrounded by cultivation; and that they exercise, not only the common or ordinary trades or callings, but even those where ingenuity and talents are required: but if the Africans possess, in common with the Europeans, both a moral and an intellectual character, who but the Slave-traders would dare to deny them the privilege of being men?

But although the *Christian* nations of Europe have endeavoured to justify their conscious violation of all the acknowledged rights of humanity in the person of the negro, by pointing to his dark colour and different features, and denying his claim to the equal privileges of a common nature; “yet our Scriptures,” as Mr. Watson justly and eloquently observes, “have not left us to determine the title of any tribe to the full honours of humanity by *accidental* circumstances. To *Man* has been given the law: ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;’ and to be capable of loving God, is the infallible criterion of our peculiar nature. To determine, then, who are *men*, it is only necessary to determine who are capable of obeying that universal and exclusive law to *man*, the love of God. The labours of the missionaries have already settled this question. The Negro through all his shades; the Hottentot through all his vanities; the Indians of America, and the Natives of New Holland, have all, in our own days, been inspired with the love of God, through the Gospel, and by this test have been proved to be our brethren.

“But if it be somewhat too late to chase the negro out of the current of our common blood, and to sever his relation to Adam and to God, yet it is affirmed by many to this hour, that at least he is so degenerate a variety of the human species as to defy all cultivation of mind and all correction of morals.

“And yet, will it be believed,” he continues, “that this contemned race can, as to intellect and genius, exhibit a brighter ancestry than our own? that they are the offshoots, wild and untamed it is true, but still the offshoots of a stem which was once proudly luxuriant in the fruits of learning and taste; whilst that from which the Goths, their calumniators, have sprung, remained hard, and knotted, and barren? For is Africa without her heraldry of science and of fame? The only probable account which can be given of the negro tribes is, that as Africa was peopled, through Egypt, by three

of the descendants of Ham, they are the offspring of Cush, Misraim, and Put. They found Egypt a morass, and converted it into the most fertile country in the world: they reared its pyramids, invented its hieroglyphics, gave letters to Greece and Rome, and, through them, to us.

“ The everlasting architecture of Africa still exists, the wonder of the world, though in ruins. Her mighty kingdoms have yet their record in history. She has poured forth her heroes in the field, given bishops to the church, and martyrs to the fires; and for negro physiognomy, as though that should shut out the light of intellect, go to your national museum, contemplate the features of the colossal head of Memnon, and the statues of the divinities, on which the ancient Africans impressed their own forms; and there see, in close resemblance to the negro feature, the mould of those countenances which once beheld, as the creatures of their own immortal genius, the noblest and most stupendous monuments of human skill, and taste and grandeur. In the imperishable porphyry and granite, is the unfounded and pitiful slander publicly, and before all the world, refuted. There we see the negro under *cultivation*; if he now presents a different aspect, cultivation is wanting; that solves the whole case; for even now, where education has been expended upon the pure and undoubted negro, it has never been bestowed in vain. Modern times have witnessed in the persons of African negroes, Generals, Physicians, Philosophers, Linguists, Poets, Mathematicians, and Merchants, all eminent in their attainments, energetic in enterprise, and honourable in character; and even the Mission Schools in the West Indies exhibit a quickness of intellect, and a thirst for learning, to which the schools of this country do not always afford a parallel.”*

It is true that we often see the negro character degraded, but when we make this a ground of reproach, we appear to

* See a Sermon by Richard Watson, p. 7, 8.—Butterworth, 1824.

forget that we ourselves have debased and brutalized that character by oppression, and in like manner when we point to the slow progress which the natives upon the shores of Africa have made in civilization, notwithstanding the advantage of their intercourse with Europe, as a proof of natural inferiority to the rest of mankind, we forget that we ourselves have long spread desolation and barbarism over those shores by a devastating series of the most atrocious crimes.

But it is a fact universally acknowledged, that the natives of the interior are far more civilized than those of the maritime parts of this continent.

The connexion of Africa with modern Europe has had a constant tendency to degrade and demoralize her; and instead of being a blessing, as it ought to have been, it has been a curse. If we trace the progress of improvement in the human race, we shall find that the borders of navigable rivers, and the shores of the sea, being the most frequented, have been the first in civilization, and that light and knowledge have afterwards spread from thence into the interior. Just the reverse has been the case in Africa. The most civilized people there are the inhabitants of the interior, while those of the shores are comparatively barbarous. Now what can have occasioned this striking difference, this appearance so contrary to the testimony of history and the experience of ages? Can we give a better reason for it than that the former have scarcely seen a white face, and that the latter have kept up for three centuries a constant connexion with the Europeans?*

It will be our next painful task to follow the unhappy Negroes to the ships—to those European ships which are to take them from every thing that is dear to them in life, and to convey them to a foreign land.

They who are made slaves in the vicinity of the rivers or

* See Park's Travels, Dupuis' Ashantee, Denham and Clapperton's Expedition to the Interior of Africa, &c

the sea-shore, have generally but a short way to travel. They are made to walk by land, with their arms pinioned, or are brought down, tied together, and lying on their backs, at the bottom of a boat.

Those who are made slaves in the interior have a long journey to perform, frequently of many moons. They are made to travel on foot, over rocks and burning sands, and through wildernesses and other inhospitable places. The black merchants, who conduct them to the Europeans, generally wait till they have collected a sufficient number to make it worth their while to undertake a journey. When the time arrives, they set off, themselves, slaves, asses, and attendants, and guards. Such a mixed group of men, animals, and merchandize travelling together, is called, in Africa, a *coffle*. These coffles are frequently increased by the junction of other coffles on the road. As Mr. Park travelled with these coffles, and perhaps is the only European who ever did so, it is to him, and to him only, that we must look for light and information on this melancholy subject.

Mr. Park informs us, that Karfa had collected at Kamalia as many slaves as would make a sufficient coffle. He tells us also that he himself conversed with them there. They are commonly secured by putting the right leg of one and the left of another into the same pair of fetters. By supporting the fetters with a string, they can walk, though very slowly. Every four slaves are likewise fastened together by the necks with a strong rope of twisted thongs; and in the night an additional pair of fetters is put on their hands, and sometimes a light iron chain passed round their necks.

At length the morning of their departure arrived, and Mr. Park was to travel with them. The first thing that the slatees did, was to take the irons from their slaves, that is, from those who were assembled before Karfa's door. They then tied up the different bundles of merchandize, and appointed to every slave the load he was to carry. "When we moved forward," says Mr. Park, "we were followed for about half a mile from

Kamalia by most of the inhabitants of the town, some of them crying, and others shaking hands with their relations, who were now about to leave them. As many of the slaves had remained for years in irons, the sudden exertion of walking quick, with heavy loads upon their heads, occasioned spasmodic contractions of their legs: and we had not proceeded above a mile, before it was found necessary to take two of them from the rope, and allow them to walk more slowly, until we reached Maraboo, a walled village, where some people were waiting to join the coffle."

On the third day after their departure we hear of them again. "During this day's travel," says Mr. Park, "a woman and a girl, belonging to a slatee of Bala, were so much fatigued, that they could not keep up with the coffle: they were severely whipped, and dragged along.

"In the course of the journey, one of the female slaves being excessively fatigued, refused to proceed any further, declaring that she would rather die than walk another step. As entreaties and threats were used in vain, the whip was at length applied; and after bearing patiently a few strokes, she started up, and walked with tolerable expedition for four or five hours longer; when she made an attempt to run away from the coffle, but was so very weak that she fell down in the grass. Though she was unable to rise, the whip was a second time applied, but without effect!

"As we had eat only one handful of meal," he continues, "since the preceding night, and travelled all day in a hot sun, many of the slaves who had loads upon their heads were very much fatigued; and some of them snap their fingers, which, among the negroes, is a sure sign of desperation. The slatees immediately put them all in irons; and such of them as had evinced signs of great despondency, were kept apart from the rest, and had their hands tied.

"In this misery the female slave before referred to being unable to proceed, and every attempt to carry her forward

being found ineffectual, the general cry of the coffle was, '*kang tegi, kang tegi*, cut her throat, cut her throat,' which was soon afterwards done.

"We continued our route," he goes on to say, "with great expedition, through the woods, until noon, when one of the Serawoolli slaves dropt the load from his head, for which he was smartly whipped. The load was replaced, but he had not proceeded above a mile, before he let it fall a second time, for which he received the same punishment. After this he travelled in great pain until about two o'clock, when we stopt to breathe a little by a pool of water, the day being remarkably hot. The poor slave was now so completely exhausted, that his master was obliged to release him from the rope, for he lay motionless on the ground. A Serawoolli, therefore, undertook to remain with him, and endeavour to bring him to the town (Baniserile) during the cool of the night. In the mean while we continued our route, and, after a very hard day's travel, arrived there ourselves in the evening. About eight o'clock the Serawoolli joined us. He told us the slave was dead: the general opinion, however, was, that he had killed him, or left him to perish on the road."

On the 30th of May, Mr. Park furnishes us with another affecting anecdote, which he gives us in the following words: "We reached Jalacotta. Here one of the slaves belonging to the coffle, who had travelled with difficulty for the last three days, was found unable to proceed any further. His master (a singing man) proposed, therefore, to exchange him for a young girl belonging to one of the townspeople. The poor girl was ignorant of her fate until the bundles were all tied up in the morning, and the coffle ready to depart; when, coming with some other young women to see the coffle set out, her master took her by the hand, and delivered her to the singing man. Never was a face of serenity more suddenly changed into one of the deepest distress. The terror

she manifested on having the load put upon her head, and the rope fastened round her neck, and the sorrow with which she bade adieu to her companions, were truly affecting.

“ I was now approaching,” he continues, “ the end of my tedious and toilsome journey, and expected, in another day, to meet with countrymen and friends : I could not part, for the last time, with my unfortunate fellow travellers, doomed, as I knew most of them to be, to a life of captivity and slavery in a foreign land, without great emotion. During a wearisome peregrination of more than five hundred English miles, exposed to the burning rays of a tropical sun, these poor slaves, amidst their own infinitely greater sufferings, would commiserate mine ; and frequently, of their own accord, bring water to quench my thirst, and at night collect branches and leaves to prepare me a bed in the wilderness. We parted with reciprocal expressions of regret and benediction. My good wishes and prayers were all I could bestow upon them ; and it afforded me some consolation to be told, that they were sensible I had no more to give.”

We have now followed the unhappy Africans, reduced to a state of slavery, from the interior of their own country to the place of their embarkation. Here a new scene commences. The black merchants, who drive them thither, sell them to the Europeans. From this period we are to follow them again. We are now to follow them across the ocean, and to see what their situation is under their new masters.

The different witnesses examined by the English Parliament all agree, that when they are put on board the vessels, they appear melancholy and dejected, and that they continue so for some time, and some of them during the whole voyage ; and that this dejection arises from the keenness of their feelings, on account of the separation from their country, their families, and their friends.

When they are brought on board, the men are chained together in pairs, the right leg of one being fastened to the left

leg of another; and in this situation, that is, two and two together, they are made to go below, to the place or prison allotted to them in the hold of the vessel. The women and children are conveyed to other parts, but they are not ironed like the men.

When the weather is fair, they are made to leave their prisons, to take the advantage of fresh air and to take their meals. The men are distributed for this purpose in long rows of two and two, from head to stern, on each side of the deck; but, to prevent them rising upon the crew, or jumping overboard, a long chain is passed through the irons of each pair of slaves, and is locked at both the ends of it to the deck.

When the vessel is full, their situation is wretched. In the best-regulated ships, a full-grown man has no more space allowed him to lie upon than sixteen English inches in breadth, which gives him about as much room as a man has in his coffin, and about two feet eight inches in height. But there are very few vessels in which even this limited allowance is afforded. In many of them, the slaves are obliged to lie upon their sides, and none of them can sit upright. Besides this, they are naked; and they have nothing to lie upon but the bare boards: on this account they suffer often very severely from the motion of the ship, which occasions different parts of their bodies to be bruised, and which causes their irons to excoriate their legs.

But their situation is the most deplorable when it blows a heavy gale, and when the hatches or gratings are obliged to be fastened down. Their sufferings are at this time such as no language can describe. They are often heard, on such occasions, to cry out in their own language, "We are dying, we are dying." The steam which comes at this time from their bodies, and which ascends through the little holes of the gratings, has been compared by those who have witnessed it, to that which issues from a furnace. Many of them, having fainted from heat, stench, and corrupted air, have been

brought out of the hold upon the deck in a dying state; while others have been brought up quite dead from suffocation, who were in perfect health but a few hours before.

Horrible as this account may appear, we assert, in the most solemn manner, that we have omitted to mention many circumstances* which would render it still more afflicting; and that we have been cautious in what we have said to keep ourselves within the bounds of truth.

Being deprived, then, generally speaking, of the power of a successful resistance, the only hope left them of escaping from their miseries is in death; that is, of destroying themselves, if any opportunity should offer, and which they seize with an avidity almost beyond belief. The most common way to which they look is that of being able to throw themselves into the sea. But here also every avenue of escape by such means is guarded. The men are not only locked to the deck, but large nettings are fastened on both sides of the ship, which reach from the deck up to a certain height in the rigging. But these precautions do not always prove a security. Many and many are the instances in which they destroy themselves in this manner.

But if they are prevented from accomplishing their object in the way now mentioned, they do not abandon the hope of being able to attain it in some other. The deepest foresight on the part of their oppressors cannot always prevent the means. When ropes have been left carelessly about the ship, though not in improper places, several of them, but mostly women, have been found suspended to these at different times; and when small instruments of iron, or even broken pieces of iron, have been left in the same manner, others have been discovered to have made mortal wounds upon their own bodies; others who have not been able to meet with such opportunities, have come to the resolution of refusing all sustenance, in or-

* See the evidence before the English Parliament, in the cases where the slaves have been afflicted with contagious disorders, particularly the flux, when, says one of the witnesses, "the floor of their prison was covered with blood and mucus, like a slaughter-house."

der to starve themselves to death ; and though the *speculum oris*, an instrument used in the disorder called the lock jaw, has been applied to force open their mouths on such occasions, they have persisted in their resolution till the tenth or eleventh day, at which time death has usually put a period to their sufferings.* With respect to others, but particularly females, who have been of more delicate temperature both of body and mind, or who have had a more lively sense of their situation, but less resolution, many are the instances where a continually increasing melancholy has ended in madness, and where they have continued in that pitiable state for the short remainder of their lives.

Such are the sufferings which the Slave Trade produces to its unhappy victims, but the depravity which it engenders in those who carry it on, is, if possible, a still more revolting feature in its character. The two following occurrences are both of recent date, and exhibit with a power beyond that of any general description, the tremendous accumulation of guilt and misery which attends the progress of the traffic.

The *Rodeur*, French vessel, of 200 tons burthen, left Havre on the 24th of January, 1819, and anchored in Bonny river, on the coast of Africa, in the March following, where she took in, contrary to the French law of the abolition of the slave trade, a cargo of slaves. On the 6th of April she sailed with them for Guadaloupe. Soon after her departure from this river, some of the slaves, who had been brought upon deck to take the air, took the opportunity of throwing themselves into the sea ; in consequence of which, the captain of the *Rodeur* made a terrible example, by shooting some of them and by hanging others. This, however, did not answer the end proposed ; and it was found, therefore, necessary to keep all of them confined below. In a short time a dreadful ophthalmia was discovered among them, which soon communicated to the crew, and which made such a rapid and general progress among the latter, that there was only one of

* *Cries of Africa*, p. 27, 28.

them who could see to steer the vessel. At this moment a large ship approached the Rodeur, which appeared to be totally at the mercy of the wind and waves. The crew of this vessel, hearing the voices of the crew of the Rodeur, cried out most vehemently for help. They told the melancholy tale, as they passed along, that their ship was a Spanish slave ship, called the S. Leon, and that a contagion had seized the eyes of all on board, so that there was not one individual, either sailor or slave, who could see. But alas! this pitiable narrative was in vain, for no help could be given! The S. Leon passed on, and was never more heard of. At length, by the skill and perseverance of the only man who preserved his sight on board the Rodeur, and by a favourable concurrence of circumstances, the ship reached Guadeloupe on the 21st of June. By this time thirty-nine of the slaves had become totally blind, twelve had lost one eye, and fourteen were affected with blemishes more or less considerable. Out of the crew, consisting of twenty-two, twelve had lost their sight, amongst whom was the surgeon; five had become blind of one eye, among whom was the captain; and four were partially injured. Now, what will the reader think was the first thing which the captain and crew of the Rodeur did, when they found that they were going to enter into a safe port? Undoubtedly, he will think that they were employed in returning thanks to God for this their miraculous deliverance. But he will be mistaken if he supposes so. Without gratitude to God, without mercy to others, without the feelings of men, the first act which they performed was to throw overboard all the poor slaves who were incurably blind, upon the plea, first, that if they carried them on shore no one would buy them, and consequently that they should have them to maintain without any return; and secondly, that by feigning an act of necessity, they might recover their value from the underwriters.

The next year, namely, 1820, furnishes us with another occurrence, equally atrocious in its nature, though of a dif-

ferent cast. Sir George Collier was at that time the commodore of the English squadron cruising in the African seas, to prevent the violation of the abolition law, as sanctioned by the English Parliament, and by treaties between England and other foreign governments. He himself was on board the Tartar frigate. In the month of March, he gave chase to a vessel which he suspected to be a slave ship. In the course of the chase, several casks were observed to be floating in the sea, which the Tartar passed, but no person could be spared at that moment to go to examine them. In a few hours afterwards, the crew of the frigate boarded the vessel which they had been pursuing, and she proved to be *La Jeune Estelle*, French vessel, the captain of which was named Olympe Sanguines. This man, on being questioned, denied that he had any slaves on board. He admitted, however, that he had had some in his possession a little time before, but that a Spanish pirate had seized them and taken them away. There was something, however, so disingenuous in his countenance, that the chief officer of the Tartar, who had boarded his vessel, ordered a search to be made in the hold. One of the English sailors, on striking a cask, heard a faint voice issue from it, as of some creature expiring. The cask was immediately opened, when two slave girls, about twelve or fourteen years of age, were found packed up in it. They were afterwards carried on board the Tartar, and thus rescued from a most painful death. When they arrived there, they were recognized by a person who had seen them in their own country. This person was then a prisoner on board the Tartar, having been taken by the commodore out of another slave ship. It appeared from his evidence, that one Captain Richards, commanding an American slave ship, had died at a village on the coast, called Trade-town, and that he had left behind him fourteen slaves, of which these two poor girls had formed a part; and that after his death, Captain Olympe Sanguines had landed his crew, armed with swords and pistols, and carried off these fourteen slaves on board *La Jeune Estelle*. Sir

George Collier, upon receiving this information, thought it right to board the vessel again, in order to find the remaining twelve; but, after a strict search, they were nowhere to be found. It then struck him and his officers (and a most painful consideration it was), that Captain Sanguines, in order to prevent his vessel from being seized as a slave ship, had packed up the twelve slaves just mentioned, in those casks which they had seen floating in the sea, one after another, soon after the commencement of the chase. But, alas! it was now too late to ascertain the truth of this conjecture, for the chase had then led them many leagues to windward of these casks; and there was no chance whatever that any of the slaves who might be enclosed in them would be found alive.*

Such are the melancholy scenes which are passing in the different slave ships, from the time of their leaving the coast of Africa, to the time of their arrival in the European colonies. During this interval, it is but reasonable to suppose, that a considerable mortality takes place among the slaves. Insurrections, suicides,† and diseases (the latter of which arise from grief of mind), sudden transitions from heat to cold, filth, stench, a putrid atmosphere, and cruel treatment, contribute to thin their numbers. It appears from the evidence of respectable witnesses examined by the English Parliament, that out of 7904 slaves, with whom they themselves sailed at different times, 2053 perished; that is, a fourth part of them perished, though they were all young and healthy when they were brought on board, in the short space of from six to eight weeks!! What a murderous devastation of the human race!! What an impious rebellion against the will of Providence, in the creation of the world!!! If the rest of mankind were to perish in this proportion, all the inhabitants on the earth would be extinct in a few years!!!

* See Supplement to the Report of the African Institution for the year 1821.

† This violation of the laws of the Creator, on the part of these unhappy people, is a new crime, which falls upon the heads of the European slave-traders.

These instances are sufficient: they shew, without having recourse to others, the corruptive nature of this traffic upon the human heart. The effects which it produces are regular and certain. They are the same in whatever age or by whatever people it may be carried on. They are irresistible; so that neither public opinion, nor the improvement of one age above another, nor the superior refinement of any particular people, can withstand their influence. They shew, therefore (what it is peculiarly desirable to know), that there is no remedy for the evils complained of, but the total Abolition of the Trade. No human regulation can do them away, because no human regulation can change the human heart.

In the year 1807, Great Britain and the United States of America passed laws entirely prohibiting the trade in all its branches, to their respective subjects; and in 1810, Portugal consented to prescribe local limits to her share of it, in that part of the African Continent which lies to the north of the Equator.

These important measures, being aided at that time by the right of visitation, which the existing state of war conferred on the belligerent nations, produced a very considerable effect. A partial cessation of the Slave Trade took place along a large portion of the African coast; and on that part of it which extends from Senegal to the Gold Coast, few traces of this odious traffic remained.

This interval of local rest from the ravages of the Slave Trade, short as it unhappily was, served abundantly to confirm the anticipation of wise and good men. The western shores of northern Africa were already beginning to exhibit a new and more cheering aspect. The pursuits of peaceful industry, and the arts of civilized life, joined to the diffusion of religious knowledge, were, slowly indeed, but progressively, repairing the desolating and barbarizing mischiefs of the Slave Trade—when the scene was suddenly changed.

No sooner was peace proclaimed, than the traders in human blood hastened from various quarters to the African

shores, and, with a cupidity sharpened by past restraint, renewed their former crimes.

Among the rest, the slave merchants of France, who had been excluded for upwards of twenty years, from any direct participation in this murderous traffic, now resumed it; and to this very hour they continue openly to carry it on, notwithstanding the solemn renunciation of it by their own government in 1815, and the prohibitory French laws which have since been passed to restrain them.

But let it not be supposed that it has been by Frenchmen alone that this dreadful scourge has been inflicted upon Africa. Traders of other nations, assuming the flag which best suited their nefarious purposes, have crowded the shores of Africa, and filled their ships with the wretched victims of the crimes which they excited. Not only have the Portuguese and Spaniards been extensively engaged in these enterprizes, but citizens of the United States, of Holland, and of Great Britain also, disguising themselves under the flag of some other country, have deeply participated in this work of destruction. It would admit of proof, that probably at no period of the existence of this opprobrious traffic, has Africa suffered more intensely from its ravages, than during a part of the time which has elapsed since the re-establishment of the peace of the civilized world. The bad men of all other countries appear to have combined to blast the improvement and happiness of Africa, and to have joined in a malignant conspiracy to frustrate all the merciful purposes of their sovereigns towards that ill-fated quarter of the globe.*

In support of these assertions, we subjoin the following authentic evidence; relating wholly to transactions of a very recent date:—

Extract of a Letter from Guadaloupe.

“ We enclose a note, which proves the continuation of the cruelties towards the unhappy Africans. I answer for its

* See a Pamphlet entitled “ Statements Illustrative of the Slave Trade,” &c.

authenticity. There are strong cruisers stationed to seize the slavers; but they laugh at them, and always reach the port; one might almost say that they protect them.

“The schooner Louisa, Captain Arnaud, arrived at L’Anse à la barque, in the quarter of St. Anne, Guadaloupe, in the early part of the month of April, 1824, with a cargo of 200 negroes. The number first embarked was 275. As the vessel could not transport so large a number, the others were thrown alive into the sea by the captain. Nature shudders at such atrocities.”

Extract of a Letter from Captain Forbes, of his Majesty’s sloop Thracian, to Vice-Admiral Sir L. W. Halsted, K.C.B. Commander in Chief, dated Port-Royal Harbour, October 22, 1824.

“I think it necessary likewise to inform you, sir, that Mr. Kilbee, the British Commissary Judge, assured me that 37 vessels had cleared out this year from the Havannah, evidently intended, by their appearance, for the Slave Trade; indeed, I had it from good information, that seven sailed in one day for that destination while I was there, and the Columbian privateers had captured three lately with slaves actually on board.”

Extract from the Sierra Leone Advertiser.

“Freetown, Saturday, November 20, 1824.

“We regret never having before inspected the numerous slave ships which have arrived here, in order to ascertain whether they answered the description set forth in their papers. The following particulars relative to three vessels taken by our squadron for being engaged in this horrible commerce, and lately brought into our harbour for adjudication in the British and Portuguese Court of Mixed Commission, will, we feel assured, astonish even our readers, who have unhappily had too many opportunities of witnessing the misery which

this traffic imposes upon its defenceless and unfortunate victims.

“ The ‘ *Diana*.’—This vessel is stated, in the Royal Passport, to be 120 tons burthen; and permitted, by this passport, in accordance with the Alvara of his Most Faithful Majesty, under date of the 24th of November, 1813, to carry 300 slaves, being at the rate of five to every two tons. On being inspected, she is found to admeasure only 66 tons, 52-94 fourths English measurement, and therefore *authorised* to take at the rate of five to each ton. The surface of the men’s slave-room is only 480 feet, and 2 feet 7 inches in height; and that of the women, 103 feet surface, and 3 feet 11 inches high; yet on board this vessel there were actually shipped at Badagry, for the passage to the Brazils, 156 human victims, besides her crew, 18 in number.

“ The ‘ *Two Brazilian Friends*.’—This vessel is also stated, by a like document, to be 146 tons, and being similarly licenced, might carry 365 slaves. On inspection, she is found to be only 95 tons, 59-94 fourths, and consequently in like manner authorized to carry at the rate of four to each ton. The surface of the platform for the men is 615 feet, and the height 2 feet 6 inches; that of the women 148 feet 8 inches surface, and 3 feet 10 inches in height. On board this vessel there were actually shipped at Badagry, for passage to the Brazils, 260 unfortunate Africans, besides her crew, 18 in number.

“ The ‘ *Avizo*.’—This vessel is, by a similar document, asserted to be 231 tons, and by her licence might carry 580 slaves. On examining her, it is ascertained that she is only 165 tons, 28-94 fourths, and therefore might carry at the rate of more than 5 to a ton. The surface of the men’s room is 861 feet, height of ditto, 3 feet 2 inches; that of the women is 215 feet surface, and the same height as the men’s. 465 wretched beings were stowed on board this vessel at the same port, for passage to the Brazils, besides her crew, 33 in number.

“ We have here 328 tons of shipping, licenced to carry 1245, and actually conveying from the coast 881 slaves, being (in these three vessels) at the rate of 11 to every 4 tons, besides the men navigating them, and the water and provisions necessary for so great a number of people for the voyage, together with their boats and ships’ stores. As the men and women thus embarked were 712 in number, and supposing the children, both boys and girls, to be either always kept on deck, or confined to the long boat (as is the practice), still only a little more than $3\frac{1}{4}$ square feet was allowed for each adult African thus shipped—a space which, we should suppose, no human being could long exist in ; and, indeed, the number of deaths, and the emaciated state of the survivors, too fully prove this to be the case. From the crowded state of these vessels, we do not hesitate to say, that it would be impossible to cram the number on board which the authorities of the Brazils (by sanctioning these false descriptions of the vessels) give the masters permission to take ; it is, therefore, to a certain extent useless, although proving to the world that this government, not content with allowing their subjects to carry on the odious traffic, sanction such means of doing so as aggravate the misery of the unfortunate victims thus forced away from their families and country. We shall make no further remarks on this painful subject, satisfied that such cruel deception as is clearly shown to be sanctioned by this power, who is thus adding further horrors to the already detestable slave trade, will not be overlooked by our government, who are no doubt in possession of the facts from our gallant Commodore and his officers. Further particulars relative to the property and proceedings of these vessels will be given in our next.

“ The French Slave Trade has lately most considerably increased in the rivers Bonny and Old Calabar. Several new vessels have arrived, and many laden with full cargoes of human victims have left under the white flag, and manned by Frenchmen, although the capital embarked is ostensibly Spa-

nish. In order that our readers may judge of the barbarity and want of feeling evinced by these subjects of an enlightened nation, which publicly disavows such horrible and infamous conduct, we desire to make known that *Le Louis*, commanded by one Oiseau, on completing her cargo of slaves in the Old Calabar, a few weeks since, without the slightest spark of humanity in him, thrust the whole of these unfortunate beings between decks (a height of only three feet) and closed the hatches for the night. When morning made its appearance, fifty of the poor sufferers had paid the debt of nature, owing to the confined, diseased, and putrid atmosphere they were condemned to respire! The wretch coolly ordered the bodies of these miserable victims of his total want of human feeling, to be thrown into the river, and immediately proceeded on shore to complete his execrable cargo by fresh purchases of his fellow-creatures. To detail all the information we have received relative to the enormities committed by these dealers in human flesh, who feel they are protected by the nation they claim and the flag they hoist, would horrify any but slave-dealers, who seem naturally callous to every feeling which ennobles mankind; suffice it to say, they are heart-rending, and would disgrace the most unenlightened savage."

On the eastern coast of Africa the ravages of the Slave Trade are also very great, and from the greater length of the voyage, a still greater sacrifice of human life takes place in transporting the slaves to America.

Extract of a Letter from Captain Owen to J. W. Croker, Esq. dated on board his Majesty's ship Leven, Mozambique, 9th of October, 1823.

"It is my duty to state, for the information of my Lords of the Admiralty, that on the eastern coast of Africa the Slave Trade has recently received a new impulse for the supply of Brazil. It would appear, that this diabolical commerce is

the only one capable of inspiring its miserable remains of Portuguese population with energy and activity. There are in this port seven vessels preparing their cargoes for Rio de Janeiro; one of them of about six hundred tons, to carry 1,200 slaves. The export of slaves from this port cannot be less than 15,000 annually.

“ At Quilliman, 16 vessels have taken cargoes within the last year, amounting to 10,000; and the new order of things brought about by the revolutions in Portugal and Brazils, has opened the ports of Quilliman and Inhamban to a direct communication with the latter, which enables them to carry on this abominable traffic more advantageously and to greater extent.

“ From Inhamban, however, the trade in slaves is very limited, compared with that of Mozambique and Quilliman, the neighbouring tribes being very averse to it; nevertheless wars are excited solely to make slaves to pay for merchandize. The same also occurs at English River to a still smaller extent, yet sufficiently so to keep the neighbouring tribes in a ferment and continual state of warfare. The price of a slave at Quilliman, Inhamban, and Delagoa, rarely exceeds two or three Spanish dollars to the Portuguese, who get for them perhaps twenty or thirty from the vessels; much of their gain is necessarily expended for their intermediate subsistence, which, however, is scarcely enough to hang soul and body together; and the ships which use this traffic consider they make an excellent voyage if they *save ONE-THIRD of the number embarked* to sell at Rio for 150 or 200 Spanish dollars each: some vessels are so fortunate as to *save one half* of their cargo alive, and their gains become a strong motive to more extensive speculations!!”

Did the limits of the present publication admit, it would be easy to confirm the foregoing statements by numerous examples of a similar nature, drawn entirely from official documents, and all tending to prove that the Slave Trade is not only as atrociously and as extensively carried on as ever, but

that it is annually on the increase. The returns of the number of Slaves brought during two successive years into one port of South America alone, Rio de Janeiro, are an additional confirmation of this fact, and form, at the same time, conclusive evidence of the present extent of the traffic.

In 1821 there were imported..... 21,199

1822 24,934

Being an increase of 3,735 in one year in the importations of a single port in Brazil.*

But the following documents present us with a still more comprehensive view of the state of the Trade at a recent period, and will, it is believed, render any further evidence unnecessary.

In a Report to the Congress of the United States of North America, dated February 9, 1821, it is said—"The extension of the trade for the last twenty-five or thirty years must, in degree, be conjectural, but the best information that can be obtained on the subject, furnishes good foundation to believe, that during that period the number of slaves withdrawn from western Africa alone, amounts to upwards of one million and a half. The annual average would be a mean somewhere between 50 and 80,000."

Captain Leeke, commander of the sloop *Myrmidon*, in a letter dated Sierra Leone, November 7, 1821, addressed to Commodore Sir Robert Mends, says—"From the river Calabar there had sailed, within the last eighteen months, 177 vessels with full cargoes; more than the half of them were under the French flag, the others, Spaniards and Portuguese. These accounts have been given me, not only from the kings and chiefs of the rivers, but from those who were actual eyewitnesses of the shipments and sailing of the unfortunate negroes. Thus you will perceive that this horrid traffic has been carried on to an extent that almost staggers belief. The vessels [126] reported in my last to have left the river Bonny

* See Mrs. Graham's Brazil, p. 228, 229.

between the months of July and November, 1820, with 86 that have already sailed this year, added to these, with 35 from the Bimbia and Cameroons, will make their number 424, many of them carrying from 500 to 1000 slaves: and by allowing only the very moderate average of 250 to each vessel, will make 106,000 slaves exported from four of the northernmost rivers in the Bight of Biafra, in the short space of eighteen months, and by far the largest half in vessels bearing the French flag."

Who can form even a faint idea of the accumulated wretchedness that must have been the lot of those unhappy beings who were in this unrighteous manner subjected to ignominy, distress, and many of them to death? In addition to this, deceit, lying, perjury, and robbery, mark the conduct of those engaged in the trade: it deadens all the kind and benevolent dispositions of man, and renders him hard-hearted, brutal, and savage. When are these scenes of cruelty to terminate? How long is man to traffic in human blood, and thus to disgrace his species?*

We have now sketched the history of this persecuted race during the period in which it has been the victim of the barbarous cupidity of the civilized world, and have given some idea of the sum of affliction and crime which Africa has received from the enlightened nations of the earth. We appeal to all who can justly estimate the disadvantage of seeing negro capacity and negro morality only under a system which brutalizes even barbarians—a system which silences the kindest and gentlest impulses of the human heart, and invests with demoniac strength every propensity to evil,—whether, even from the scanty materials thus afforded, incontrovertible evidence does not remain of a nature as bountifully endowed as our own. Slavery has carried on its fiend-like work by causing vices to coalesce which have no natural affinity, by bringing into unnatural combination the evils of

* See Statement, &c.

two distinct stages of society, and all that it has borne to Africa of the boasted acquirements of civilized life, has been a masterly skill in the contrivance, and an unhesitating daring in the commission of crime, which the mind of a savage was too simple to devise and his heart too gentle to execute. Yet even from a desert so sterile in all that is good, so distinguished by the darkest features of sin and misery, enough may be collected to prove the existence of a soul capable of yielding rich produce, had it been cultivated by benevolent skill instead of being devastated by senseless barbarity.

We now follow the afflicted Negro to the Land of his Oppression, and commence a melancholy era in his history, on beholding him within the realms of Slavery, with the chain of bondage rivetted upon him.

CONDITION OF THE NEGRO SLAVES IN THE WEST INDIES AND AMERICA.

In the Colonies of Great Britain there are at this moment upwards of 800,000 human beings in a state of degrading personal slavery.

These unhappy persons, whether young or old, male or female, are the absolute property of their master, who may sell or transfer them at his pleasure, and who may also regulate according to his discretion (within certain limits) the measure of their labour, their food, and their punishment.

Many of the slaves are (and all may be) branded like cattle, by means of a hot iron, on the shoulder or other conspicuous part of the body, with the initials of their master's name; and thus bear about them, in indelible characters, the proof of their debased and servile state.

The slaves, whether male or female, are driven to labour by the impulse of the cart-whip, for the sole benefit of their owners, from whom they receive no wages; and this labour

is continued (with certain intermissions for breakfast and dinner) from morning to night throughout the year.

In the season of crop (which lasts for four or five months of the year) their labour is protracted not only throughout the day, as at other times, but during half the night, or the whole of every alternate night.

Besides being generally made to work under the lash, without wages, the slaves are further obliged to labour for their own maintenance on that day which ought to be devoted to repose and religious instruction. And as that day is also their only market-day, it follows, that "Sunday shines no Sabbath-day to them," but is of necessity a day of worldly occupation and much bodily exertion.

The Colonial Laws arm the master, or any one to whom he may delegate his authority, with a power to punish his slaves to a certain extent, without the intervention of the magistrate, and without any responsibility for the use of this tremendous discretion; and to that extent he may punish them for any offence, or for no offence. These discretionary punishments are usually inflicted on the naked body with the cart-whip, an instrument of dreadful severity, which cruelly lacerates the flesh of the sufferer. Even the unhappy females are equally liable with the men to have their persons thus shamelessly exposed and barbarously tortured at the caprice of their master or overseer.

The slaves being regarded in the eye of the law as mere chattels, they are liable to be seized in execution for their master's debts, and, without any regard to the family ties which may be broken by this oppressive and merciless process, to be sold by auction to the highest bidder, who may remove them to a distant part of the same colony, or even exile them to another colony.

Marriage, that blessing of civilized and even of savage life, is protected in the case of the slaves by no legal sanction. It cannot be said to exist among them. Those, therefore, who live together as man and wife, are liable to be separated

by the caprice of their master, or by sale for the satisfaction of his creditors.

The slaves in general have little or no access to the means of Christian instruction.

The effect of the want of such instruction, as well as of the absence of any marriage tie, is, that the most unrestrained licentiousness (exhibited in a degrading, disgusting, and depopulating promiscuous intercourse) prevails almost universally among the slaves; and is encouraged no less universally by the example of their superiors, the whites.

The evidence of slaves is not admitted by the Colonial Courts, in any civil or criminal case affecting a person of free condition. If a white man, therefore, perpetrates the most atrocious acts of barbarity in the presence of slaves only, the injured party is left without any means of legal redress.

In none of the Colonies of Great Britain have those legal facilities been afforded to the slave to purchase his own freedom, which have produced such extensively beneficial effects in the colonial possessions of Spain and Portugal; where the slaves have been manumitted in large numbers, not only without injury, but with benefit to the master, and with decided advantage to the public peace and safety. On the contrary, in many of our colonies even the voluntary manumission of slaves by their masters has been obstructed, and in some rendered nearly impossible, by large fines.

It is an universal principle of Colonial Law, that all black or coloured persons are presumed and taken to be slaves, unless they can legally prove the contrary. The liberty, therefore, even of free persons is thus often greatly endangered, and sometimes lost. They are liable to be apprehended as runaway slaves; and they are further liable, as such, to be sold into endless bondage, if they fail to do that which, though free, nay, though born perhaps in Great Britain itself, they may be unable to do—namely, to establish the fact of their freedom by such evidence as the colonial laws require,

Let it be remembered also, that many thousand infants are annually born within the British dominions to no inheritance but that of the hapless, hopeless servitude which has been described; and the general oppressiveness of which might be inferred from this striking and most opprobrious fact alone, that while in the United States of America the slaves increase rapidly—so rapidly as to double their number in twenty years—there is, even now, in the British colonies, no increase, but on the contrary a diminution of their numbers.*

In order to illustrate the above statements, we subjoin a few extracts from a recent work, entitled “The West Indies as they Are,” by the Rev. Richard Bickell, late Naval Chaplain at Port Royal, &c.

“The time of labour for the slaves, generally, is from sunrising to sunseting, viz. from five o’clock to seven one half the year, and from six to six, or thereabout, the other half. They are generally summoned from their slumbers by the cracking of the driver’s whip, about half an hour before daylight; which whip, as it is pretty long and heavy, makes the valleys resound and the welkin ring with its alarming sounds, and woe be to the hapless slave who does not lend a willing ear and speedy footsteps to its repeated calls. If he be absent at roll-call, the judge, juror, and executioner, all stand by him in the shape of an inexorable driver, and, without any defence or leave of appeal, he is subjected to the lash. Nor will a trifling excuse serve the black female: she makes the best of her way to take her place, her unequal share of the task, by the strong-armed and stout-made man, in the well dressed-up rank of the gang. Should she be too late, her sex and slender form, or gentle nature, will not avail; but, as if devoid of feeling, she is laid down by force, and punished with stripes on those parts which in women for

* See Brief View, &c.

decency's sake, ought never to be exposed. Surely nature is outraged at such devilish indelicacies.

“ Out of this time is allowed half an hour for breakfast, and two hours for dinner, but many overseers have the first shell blown for dinner at half past twelve o'clock, and the second at two to go to the field again, as they are not very particular when they are busy in crop, or wish to have a certain quantity of work done. Independent of this also, in crop-time, the gangs are divided, and one half must work at night whilst the other half sleeps; though on some estates, where they have great strength, as they term it (*viz.* where the negroes are more numerous than strict necessity requires for the quantity of land in cultivation), the whole number is divided into three parts; so that on most sugar estates the slaves work one half the year three nights in the week, independent of the days, and on the others two nights a week. With respect to the hardness of the labour, it is not greater than (perhaps not so great as) our husbandmen are accustomed to in England; nor do I think it possible for any men to work so hard in a tropical climate as they could in a cold one; but the length of time that they are employed, *viz.* eleven or twelve hours, besides the night-work, is more than was intended for man to bear, and must hasten debility and old age. For the poor women it is a great deal too much, as their frail frames cannot stand it many years.”—Pp. 47—50.

“ The constant use of the whip is also a principal cause of one of the greatest hardships in West Indian slavery, for seeing that work is their only portion, they are, as I before observed, inclined to be indolent, and a driver is continually after them in the field, to flog them with his heavy whip, if they do not work so hard as he thinks they ought. It is certainly a most degrading sight to see one fellow-creature following twenty, thirty, or forty others, and every now and then lashing them as he would a team of horses or mules; but this is not all, for if any one offends more than ordinarily, master driver, who has almost unlimited power, takes him or

her from the ranks, and, having two or three strong negroes to hold the culprit down, lays on twenty or thirty lashes with all his might. Thirty-nine is the number specified by law, beyond which even a white man cannot legally go in one day; but I have seen a black driver lay on most unmercifully upwards of forty at one time, whilst his fellow-slave was crying out for mercy so that he could be heard a quarter of a mile from the spot."—Pp. 12, 13.

Mr. Cooper observes that he never saw a negro who did not exhibit marks of violence, that is to say, traces of the whip, in his body.

"Another of the evils of slavery is, that the slaves are so degraded and depressed in the eye of the law as not to be considered persons, but mere animals or chattels; so that they can be sold, not only at the will and pleasure of their masters or owners, to any other person, at any part of the island, but can be seized and sold for debt, by a writ of execution, and exposed for sale at a public auction to the best bidder. Many a bitter cry is heard when the Marshal's deputies (dogs as they are emphatically called) are sent to hunt down and seize the victim or victims, and drive or drag them away to the workhouse, or gaol, till the day of sale arrives, which is to deprive them of their little homes, the gardens they have cultivated, the acquaintances they have made, and all the little comforts which make even slavery, in some measure, tolerable. This hardship is much increased when slaves are married, or have families, as the woman may be separated from her husband, or parents from their children; for here the tenderest ties of nature are broken in an instant, and the wife's, or mother's, or children's cries would not be in the least attended to, nor heeded, any more than the moans of so many [brute] animals."—Pp. 16, 17.

The truth of these statements is amply confirmed by the advertisements for the sale of negroes in every Colonial Gazette. We extract two or three, among many others, from the Royal Gazette of Jamaica, of June 15, 1823.

April 26, 1823. " For sale, fifteen valuable young Negroes, together or *singly*, to suit purchasers."

May 10, 1823. " Notice is hereby given, that on Tuesday next I will put up to public sale, a Negro woman, named Violet, a Creole, accustomed to all sorts of work, levied upon for taxes due, by G. H. Swift."

" Quasheba, a black, a drudge, age 28 years, belonging to Solomon Isaac."

It has indeed been confidently affirmed, that the law of Jamaica forbids the separation of families by sale. There is, however, no such law. And if there were, yet in practice it is obviously violated every day. There is a law indeed, that when persons of the same family are seized by the marshal, they shall be sold together. But what law can ensure their being *seized*, as well as *sold* together? And even this law is no restraint on the power of the proprietor. He may sell *fifteen young negroes, either together or singly*, as best suits his interest. And then to look at the sales by the marshal or tax-gatherer: had Quasheba or Violet no relations or connections, their ties with whom were torn asunder? Had the infants of six or eight years, sold singly, no parent, no brother, no sister? These facts speak volumes.

The following occurrence, related by Mr. Gilgrass, a methodist missionary, is decisive as to the absolute and uncontrollable right of property vested in the slave-holder.

" A master of slaves who lived near us, in Kingston, Jamaica, exercised his barbarities on a Sabbath morning, while we were worshipping God in the chapel; and the cries of the female sufferers have frequently interrupted us in our devotions. But there was no redress for them or for us. This man wanted money; and one of the female slaves having two fine children, he sold one of them, and the child was torn from her maternal affection. In the agony of her feelings, she made a hideous howling, and for that crime was flogged. Soon after he sold her other child. This 'turned her heart within her,' and impelled her into a kind of madness. She

howled night and day in the yard; tore her hair; ran up and down the streets and the parade, rending the heavens with her cries and literally watering the earth with her tears. Her constant cry was, ‘*Da wicked massa Jew, he sell my children. Will no Buckra massa pity Negar? What me do? Me no have one child!*’ As she stood before the window, she said, lifting up her hands towards heaven, ‘*My massa, do my massa minister, pity me! My heart do so*’ (shaking her head), ‘*my heart do so, because me have no child. Me go to massa house, in massa yard, and in my hut, and me no see ’em.*’ And then her cry went up to God.”*

We shall give further evidence of the present condition of the slaves in our Colonies, by a few short extracts from the returns of the Fiscal of Berbice (a magistrate appointed to redress the grievances of the slaves), printed by order of the House of Commons, 23d of June, 1825.

A negro woman, named Laura, belonging to plantation Reliance, with a very young child at the breast, complains that she is not allowed to take her child to the field to give it the breast now and then, but is obliged to leave it with an old woman at home. When she steals from her work to the child and is discovered, the manager flogs her. She brought this child into the world with great pain; it is of a weakly constitution, and requires a mother’s care, which she is not allowed to bestow. The manager does not deny any of the above facts, only says, that *the women with young children are not required to come out till half past six in the morning, and they quit the field at half past ten, return to the field at half past one, and leave it at half past five.*

The complaints are more frequent from Sandvoot, formerly one of the crown estates, than from any other plantation. “*Carolus* says he is sick and swelling, and that he cannot work though willing. When he complains of sickness, the manager licks him, instead of helping him. Yes-

* *Watson’s Defence of Methodists*, p. 26.

terday he was twice licked." (P. 33.)—" *Amsterdam* says he is afflicted with pains in his bones; he does his best, but cannot work as others who are healthy. Mr. Cameron licks him with a horse-whip, curses him, and when he goes to the hospital drives him away." (P. 34).—*Mietje* (and her child Mars). "She says she is willing to work when healthy. She went yesterday sick to the hospital. Instead of getting physic she received a flogging. She is still sick, and has come to complain."

Mr. Grade, the manager of plantation l'Esperance, is charged by the slaves with various delinquencies. A pregnant woman, named Rosa, was employed picking coffee with some other women. Thinking they did not pick enough or well, Mr. Grade ordered the driver Zondag to flog them. The driver did so. Rosa had previously objected to working, as being too big, and being unable to stoop; but the manager overruled the objection, and she went to pick coffee on her knees. When Zondag came to her, he said to the manager, "This woman is big with child." The manager replied, "Give it to her till the blood flies out." She was flogged with the whip doubled. This was on a Friday. She was sent to the field on Saturday, but being seized with pains in her loins, was sent to the hospital. The doctor examined her, and ordered her to the field again. On Sunday she was delivered of a dead child, after a severe labour. The child's arm was broken, and one eye was bruised and sunk in the head. This woman had had seven children before by one husband. The driver, Zondag, and several others, confirmed the above statement. The driver being particularly asked, whether on his representing that Rosa was pregnant, the manager had used the expression, "never mind, flog her till the blood comes," replied "Yes." (Pp. 25—27.)

Complaint of the woman *Minkie*, belonging to Thomas C. Jones. "Says Mr. Jones took her out of the barracks on Tuesday; after I got home, he sent me to Mr. Henery; he would not buy me. He sent me to another gentleman. I

do not know his name, but he lives in town : they both said my master asked too much money for me, and sent me back. I begged for a pass to look for an owner ; he said no, he would put me down and cut my —, and would give me more than the law gives. I was then laid down and tied to three stakes, and Chance flogged me with a cart-whip ; I got a severe flogging ; I saw Mr. Layfield at his door with another gentleman, and Mr. Kerschner the baker, saw it from his window. Mr. Jones bought me from Mr. Logie, of Demerara. I have marks of severe punishment visible on me, old and recent floggings, all inflicted by Jones.

Exhibits her posteriors, which are covered with a plaister, by order of the doctor, and apparently lacerated to that degree, that the court judged it expedient to direct her not to uncover it.

Mr. Jones said he *had* flogged her, and broke her mouth for her insolence. He had thirty-nine laid on her, and *they were well inflicted*. When he sent for her he had no intention of flogging her ; but after sending her to three persons for sale and not succeeding, he told her she had often deserved a flogging : he then directed her to be flogged, and that they should be well laid on, which was done.

We cannot spare room for any further extracts, but we believe they will be unnecessary.

Should the reader wish to be furnished with additional evidence upon this subject, he is referred to the Report from which the above is taken, and to the following publications :—

Delineation of Colonial Slavery. By JAMES STEPHEN, Esq.

Negro Slavery as it exists in the United States and the West Indies, especially in Jamaica. 1820.

The Slave Colonies of Great Britain, or a Picture of Negro Slavery drawn by the Colonists themselves. 1825.

The West Indies as they Are. By the Rev. R. BICKELL.

If from the West Indies we pass to the United States of America, we find Slavery existing in a milder form, but still attended with the same debasing influence upon the character of the master, and the same injustice and oppression to the slave.

The following anecdote is extracted from a work entitled "Letters from Virginia, by a Virginian," quoted in Hall's Travels in the United States:—

"I took the boat this morning, and crossed the ferry over to Portsmouth, the small town which I told you is opposite to this place. It was court-day, and a large crowd of people was gathered about the door of the court-house. I had hardly got upon the steps to look in, when my ears were assailed by the voice of singing, and turning round to discover from what quarter it came, I saw a group of about thirty negroes, of different sizes and ages, following a rough-looking white man, who sat carelessly lolling in his sulky. They had just turned round the corner, and were coming up the main street to pass by the spot where I stood, on their way out of town. As they came nearer, I saw some of them loaded with chains to prevent their escape; while others had hold of each other's hands, strongly grasped, as if to support themselves in their affliction. I particularly noticed a poor mother, with an infant sucking at her breast as she walked along, while two small children had hold of her apron on either side, almost running to keep up with the rest. They came along singing a little wild hymn, of sweet and mournful melody, flying, by a divine instinct of the heart, to the consolation of religion, the last refuge of the unhappy, to support them in their distress. The sulky now stopped before the tavern, at a little distance beyond the court-house, and the driver got out. "My dear sir," said I to a person who stood near me, "can you tell me what these poor people have been doing? what is their crime? and what is to be their punishment?" "O," said he, "it is nothing at all but a parcel of negroes sold to Carolina; and that man is their driver, who has

bought them." "But what have they done, that they should be sold into banishment?" "Done!" said he, "nothing at all that I know of; their masters wanted money, I suppose, and these drivers give good prices." Here the driver, having supplied himself with brandy, and his horse with water (the poor negroes of course wanted nothing), stepped into his chair again, cracked his whip, and drove on, while the miserable exiles followed in funeral procession behind him."

The following is from Mr. Birkbeck's Notes on a Journey in America:—

"May 10. I saw two female slaves and their children sold by auction in the street; an incident of common occurrence here, though horrifying to myself and many other strangers. I could hardly bear to see them handled and examined like cattle; and when I heard their sobs, and saw the big tears roll down their cheeks at the thoughts of being separated, I could not refrain from weeping with them. In selling these unhappy beings, little regard is had to the parting of the nearest relations. Virginia prides itself on the comparative mildness of its treatment of the slaves; and, in fact, they increase in numbers, many being annually supplied from this state to those further south, where the treatment is said to be much more severe. There are regular dealers who buy them up, and drive them in gangs, chained together, to a southern market. I am informed that few weeks pass without some of them being marched through this place. A traveller told me, that he saw, two weeks ago, one hundred and twenty sold by auction in the streets of Richmond, and that they filled the air with their lamentations."

But an extract from Fearon's Travels in America will still more clearly illustrate the total disregard to the social rights and individual sufferings of the Negro, which prevails in the Slave States.

The scene is laid at Lawe's hotel, at Middletown, in Kentucky. "A few minutes before dinner, my attention was excited by the piteous cries of a human voice, accompanied with

the loud cracking of a whip. Following the sound, I found that it issued from a log-barn, the door of which was fastened. Peeping through the logs, I perceived the bar-keeper of the tavern, together with a stout man, more than six feet high, who was called Colonel ———, and a negro boy about fourteen years of age, stripped naked, receiving the lashes of these monsters, who *relieved* each other in the use of a horsewhip; the poor boy fell down upon his knees several times, begging and praying that they would not kill him, and that he would do any thing they liked; this produced no cessation in their exercise. At length Mr. Lawes, the master of the hotel, arrived, told the valiant colonel and his humane employer, the bar-keeper, to desist, and that the boy's refusal to cut wood was in obedience to his (Mr. L.'s) directions. Colonel ——— said, that 'he did not know what the Nigger had done, but that the bar-keeper requested his assistance to whip Cæsar. Of course he lent him a hand, being no more than he should expect Mr. Lawes to do for him under similar circumstances.

"At table Mr. Lawes said, that he had not been so vexed for seven years. This expression gave me pleasure, and also afforded me, as I thought, an opportunity to reprobate the general system of slavery; but not one voice joined with mine; each gave vent in the following language to the superabundant quantity of the milk of human kindness with which their breasts were overflowing:—

" 'I guess he deserved all he got.'

" 'It would have been of small account if the nigger had been whipt to death.'

" 'I always serve my niggers that way: there is nothing else so good for them.'

"It appeared that this boy was the property of a regular slave-dealer, who was then absent at Natchez with a cargo.

Mr. Lawes' humanity fell lamentably in my estimation, when he stated, 'that whipping niggers, if they were his own, was perfectly right, and they always deserved it; but

what made him mad was, that the boy was left under his care by a friend, and he did not like to have a friend's property injured.'

"There is in this instance of the treatment of a negro, nothing that in this State is at all singular; and much as I condemned New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, when in those sections, I must now give them the character of enlightened humanity compared with this State, in which such conduct as that I have described, is tolerated and approved."*

"If the political effects of slavery are pernicious to the citizen, its moral effects are still more fatal to the man. 'There must doubtless,' says Mr. Jefferson, 'be an unhappy influence on the manners of the people produced by the existence of slavery among us. The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions; the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submission on the other. Our children see this, and learn to imitate it, for man is an imitative animal. The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives loose to the worst of passions; and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities. The man must be a prodigy who can retain his morals and manners undepraved by such circumstances.'—Notes, p. 241.

"We know the time of prodigies is past, and that natural effects will follow their causes. The manners of the lower classes in the southern states are brutal and depraved; those of the upper, corrupted by power, are frequently arrogant and assuming: unused to restraint or contradiction of any kind, they are necessarily quarrelsome; and in their quarrels the native ferocity of their hearts breaks out. Duelling is not only in general vogue and fashion, but is practised with circumstances of peculiar vindictiveness. It is usual when two

* Fearon, p. 239—241.

persons have agreed to fight, for each to go out regularly and practise at a mark, in the presence of their friends, during the interval which precedes their meeting; one of the parties, therefore, commonly falls.”*

But the Negro, subject as he is to every species of abuse and indignity, and debased as he must have been by a long period of degrading servitude, still occasionally exhibits, even here, a moral elevation of character, in striking contrast to the degradation of soul so universal among his oppressors.

Lieutenant Hall has given us an account of the trial and execution of a negro, which took place during his stay in Charleston, South Carolina.

“ A man died on board a merchant ship, apparently in consequence of poison mixed with the dinner served up to the ship’s company. The cabin-boy and cook were suspected, because they were, from their occupations, the only persons on board who did not partake of the mess, the effects of which began to appear as soon as it was tasted. As the offence was committed on the high seas, the cook, though a negro, became entitled to the benefit of a jury, and, with the cabin-boy was put on his trial. The boy, a fine-looking lad, and wholly unabashed by his situation, was readily acquitted. The Negro’s turn was next. He was a man of low stature, ill shapen, and with a countenance singularly disgusting. The proofs against him were, first, that he was cook; so who else could have poisoned the mess? It was indeed overlooked, that two of the crew had absconded since the ship came into port. Secondly, he had been heard to utter expressions of ill humour before he went on board: that part of the evidence indeed was suppressed which went to explain these expressions. The real proof, however, was written in his skin and in the uncouth lines of his countenance. He was found guilty.

“ Mr. Crafts, junior, a gentleman of the Charleston bar,

* See Hall’s Travels in America.

who, from motives of humanity, had undertaken his defence, did not think a man ought to die for his colour, albeit it was the custom of the country; and moved in consequence for a new trial, on the ground of partial and insufficient evidence; but the Judge, who had urged his condemnation with a vindictive earnestness, intrenched himself in forms, and found the law gave him no power in favour of mercy. He then forwarded a representation of the case to the President, through one of the senators of the State; but the senator ridiculed the idea of interesting himself for the life of a negro, who was therefore left to his cell and the hangman. In this situation he did not, however, forsake himself; and it was now, when prejudice and persecution had spent their last arrow upon him, that he seemed to put on his proper nature, to vindicate not only his innocence, but the moral equality of his race, and those mental energies which the white man's pride would deny to the shape of his head and the woolliness of his hair. Maintaining the most undeviating tranquillity, he conversed with ease and cheerfulness whenever his benevolent counsel, who continued his kind attentions to the last, visited his cell. I was present on one of these occasions, and observed his tone and manner, neither sullen nor desperate, but quiet and resigned, suggesting whatever occurred to him on the circumstances of his own case, with as much calmness as if he had been uninterested in the event; yet as if he deemed it a duty to omit none of the means placed within his reach for vindicating his innocence. He had constantly attended the exhortations of a Methodist preacher, who, for conscience sake, visited 'those who were in prison;' and, having thus strengthened his spirit with religion, on the morning of his execution, breakfasted, as usual, heartily; but before he was led out, he requested permission to address a few words of advice to the companions of his captivity. 'I have observed much in them,' he added, 'which requires to be amended, and the advice of a man in my situation may be respected.' A circle was accordingly formed in his cell, in the midst of

which he seated himself, and addressed them at some length, with a sober and collected earnestness of manner, on the profligacy which he had noted in their behaviour, while they had been fellow prisoners; recommending to them the rules of conduct prescribed by that religion in which he now found his support and consolation.

“ Certainly, if we regard the quality and condition of the actors only, there is an infinite distance betwixt this scene and the parting of Socrates with his disciples: should we, however, put away from our thoughts such differences as are merely accidental, and seize that point of coincidence which is most interesting and important, namely, the triumph of mental energy over the most clinging weaknesses of our nature, the negro will not appear wholly unworthy of a comparison with the sage of Athens. The latter occupied an exalted station in the public eye; though persecuted even unto death and ignominy by a band of triumphant despots, he was surrounded in his last moments by his faithful friends and disciples, to whose talents and affection he might safely trust the vindication of his fame, and the unsullied whiteness of his memory; he knew that his hour of glory must come, and that it would not pass away. The negro had none of these aids; he was a man friendless and despised; the sympathies of society were locked up against him; he was to atone for an odious crime by an ignominious death; the consciousness of his innocence was confined to his own bosom, there probably to sleep for ever; to the rest of mankind he was a wretched criminal, an object, perhaps, of contempt and detestation, even to the guilty companions of his prison-house; he had no philosophy with which to reason down those natural misgivings which may be supposed to precede the violent dissolution of life and body; he could make no appeal to posterity to reverse an unjust judgment. To have borne all this patiently would have been much; he bore it heroically.

“ Having ended his discourse, he was conducted to the scaffold, where, having calmly surveyed the crowds collected

to witness his fate, he requested leave to address them. Having obtained permission, he stepped firmly to the edge of the scaffold, and having commanded silence by his gestures, ‘ You are come,’ said he, ‘ to be spectators of my sufferings ; you are mistaken, there is not a person in this crowd but suffers more than I do. I am cheerful and contented, for I am innocent.’ He then observed, that he truly forgave all those who had taken any part in his condemnation, and believed that they had acted conscientiously from the evidence before them ; and disclaimed all idea of imputing guilt to any one. He then turned to his counsel, who, with feelings which honoured humanity, had attended him to the scaffold : ‘ To you, sir,’ said he, ‘ I am indeed most grateful ; had you been my son, you could not have acted by me more kindly ;’ and observing his tears, he continued, ‘ This, sir, distresses me beyond any thing I have felt yet : I entreat you will feel no distress on my account, I am happy.’ Then praying to heaven to reward his benevolence, he took leave of him, and signified his readiness to die, but requested he might be excused from having his eyes and hands bandaged ; wishing, with an excusable pride, to give this final proof of his unshaken firmness ; he, however, submitted on this point to the representations of the sheriff, and died without the quivering of a muscle.

“ The spectators, who had been drawn together partly by idle curiosity and partly by a detestation of his supposed crime, retired with tears for his fate, and execrations on his murderers.”*

It is admitted, however, that the treatment of the Slaves in the United States is, in general, much better than in the West India islands.

“ The slave codes of several of the North American States, and particularly of Carolina, Georgia, and Louisiana, are still more harsh and revolting than our own ; and the

* Hall, p. 433—438.

prejudices there entertained against the African colour, are, if possible, still more deep-rooted and inveterate than those of the British Colonists; and yet, if we compare the *practical* results of the treatment of the slaves in the two cases, we shall be astonished at the difference.

“ In 1790, the Slave Population of the United States amounted by the census to 676,696. In 1820 it had risen to 1,531,431, being an increase of nearly 130 per cent. in thirty years.*

“ In the year 1690, Jamaica contained 40,000 Slaves. Had these been allowed to increase since that time at the rate of the slaves in the United States since 1790, they would now have amounted to three or four millions; or even if they had increased at the rate at which the Maroons, a part of their own body, have, when undisturbed, been increasing, they would now amount to two or three millions. But besides this original stock of 40,000 slaves, there have been imported into and retained in Jamaica upwards of 800,000 Africans. Had these 84,000 slaves merely maintained their numbers, the slave population of Jamaica would be from *two to three times* as numerous as it is. But had they gone on increasing at the rate of slaves in the United States; or even at that of the Maroons in Jamaica itself, the population would now have been quite immense.

“ But if we comprehend in our estimate, not only Jamaica, but the whole of our Slave Colonies, and review the progress of population in them all since their first formation, how appalling would be the amount of human life, in fact of *human sacrifice*, which they have cost us, and which they are still costing us! And what have been the proximate causes of all this frightful accumulation of misery and death? Without all question, they have been *severity of treatment, excess of labour, and scantiness of food.*”†

* Of this increase a portion not exceeding 100,000 at the utmost, may be attributed to fresh importations from Africa.

† See Appendix to Second Report of Anti-Slavery Society.

If no individual instances of cruelty were in existence, a fact like this would be awfully decisive of the peculiarly oppressive nature of British Colonial Slavery.

At the same time, the British Colonies are cursed no less than we have seen the Slave States of the Union to be, with that most dreadful of all the evils of slavery—the profligate state of society which results from its depraving influence upon the moral character both of the slave and his master.

“ In Jamaica,” Mr. Cooper says, “ the state of morals and religion is as bad as can well be imagined, both among whites and blacks. With scarcely any exceptions, all of the former description residing in Plantations, live in a state of open and avowed concubinage with black and coloured women. The general profligacy in this respect is perfectly notorious and undisguised.” He does not recollect to have seen a single white man there who showed any serious concern about religion, except some missionaries.*

“ It must be admitted,” says Dr. Williamson, “ that the means of religious instruction to negroes, in Jamaica, are yet extremely defective ; and, it is still more painful to add, that the white inhabitants are culpably inattentive to public religious duties. It were well if that were all. *Contempt for religion is openly avowed by a great proportion of those to be met with in that country.*

“ The propriety of matrimony,” he tells us, “ is seldom impressed on the minds of the negroes, by the clergy or any other white persons. Indeed, the latter, themselves, show the example of a libidinous course of life, and follow that promiscuous intercourse which can scarcely be justified in savages.”†

* Negro Slavery, p. 41, 42.

† Since last year, a Return from the Slave Colonies of the number of Marriages between Slaves which have taken place within five years, from the 1st of January, 1821, to the 31st of December, 1825, has been laid before the House of Commons. Nothing can so strikingly exemplify the state of West Indian Society and West Indian Morals. We subjoin the number of

Is it possible for any serious mind to read these extracts, and to reflect upon the many instances of ferocious barbarity exhibited by the masters of slaves and their agents, without acknowledging the Righteous Government and retributive justice of the Almighty? The black and coloured race do not alone experience the pernicious consequences of the prevalence of slavery. The *curse* has reached beyond them, and the moral debasement which it has engendered in the minds of the chief actors in this drama of guilt and blood—in the minds of the masters of slaves, furnishes a striking comment on that passage of Holy Writ, “They shall eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.”*

Marriages in each Island during this period, with the amount of Slave Population in each.

	<i>Population.</i>	<i>No. of Marriages in 5 years.</i>
Bahamas	9,000	7
Barbadoes	80,000	1
Berbice	22,000	none
Demerara	75,000	none
Dominica	15,000	129‡
Grenada	25,000	14
Honduras	—	1
Jamaica	330,000	2493§
Neves	9,500	5
St. Christopher's	20,000	18
St. Vincent's	24,000	4
Tobago	14,000	none
Trinidad	23,000	11

Can any thing in the known world be compared to the profligacy of manners which a return like this discloses?

* See Negro Slavery.

‡ Wholly by the Catholic Curé, not one between Slaves having been celebrated by any Protestant Clergyman.

§ These Marriages have chiefly taken place in the parishes where Methodist Missionaries have obtained a footing. In eleven other parishes, containing 173,000 Slaves, there are only 68 Marriages in five years, or about 13 in each year.

MEASURES OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT FOR AMELIORATING THE CONDITION OF THE SLAVES IN ITS COLONIES, &c.

The Reader has now been presented with a faint outline of the evils of Slavery. The few facts which have been selected from a multitude of similar character, are not cases of unexampled or infrequent atrocity, they are the daily recurring enormities of the system; they prove but too plainly that slavery is, under all circumstances, the same revolting institution, and awfully and impressively illustrate the dreadful accumulation of guilt and misery which it involves.

After the Slave Trade had been abolished by this country in the year 1807, it was generally believed that we had cleared our hands from the stain of its iniquities, and it is only two or three years ago that the people of England were made acquainted with the injustice and oppression still exercised upon the African race within the limits of the British Empire and under the sanction of British laws. The facts then made public gave rise to a general sentiment of indignation, and petitions from all parts of the country were soon presented to Parliament, calling upon the Legislature to interpose its authority for the protection of the slaves.

On the 15th of May, 1823, Mr. Buxton made a motion upon the subject in the House of Commons, when the following amended resolutions were proposed by the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and carried unanimously:—

“ That it is expedient to adopt effectual and decisive measures for meliorating the condition of the Slave Population in his Majesty’s dominions.

“ That through a determined and persevering, but at the same time judicious and temperate enforcement of such measures, the House looks forward to a progressive improvement in the character of the slave population; such as may pre-

pare them for a participation in the civil rights and privileges which are enjoyed by other classes of his Majesty's subjects.

“ That the House is anxious for the accomplishment of that purpose at the earliest period which shall be compatible with the well-being of slaves themselves, with the safety of the Colonies, and with a fair and equitable consideration for the interests of private property.”

In pursuance of these resolutions, the Ministers pledged themselves to the speedy adoption of measures for mitigating the evils of slavery in our Colonies, with a view to the ultimate emancipation of the slaves.

An Order in Council was in consequence framed, comprising a variety of regulations for ameliorating the condition of the slave population, which it was understood were to be enforced in all the Crown Colonies. Instructions were also transmitted by Earl Bathurst to the Governors of the other Colonies, requiring each of them to urge the adoption of similar measures of improvement upon the Legislature of the Colony under his government, and detailing at some length the nature of the reforms which his Majesty's Ministers had in contemplation.

Of the nature of these instructions some judgment may be formed from the following brief sketch of the Order in Council promulgated in Trinidad, in which they were for the most part embodied.

Of this Order, Clauses 1, 6, 7, and 8—relate to the appointment of a Protector and Guardian of the Slaves, to whom a variety of important functions are assigned.

Clauses 9 and 10.—As soon as effectual provision shall have been made for the religious instruction of the slaves, Sunday markets are to cease; and in the mean time they are to be held only before ten in the morning of Sunday. As soon, however, as effectual provision shall have been made for religious instruction, then Thursday is to be made the market-day instead of Sunday. The master is forbid to compel the slave to labour for his benefit on the Sunday.

Clause 11—prohibits the use of the whip, or other instrument of the like nature, for the purpose of coercing or compelling labour in the field.

Clause 12—directs, that when the whip is used as an instrument of punishment by the master or manager, the number of lashes shall not exceed twenty-five at any one time, and for one offence; nor is any punishment to be inflicted till former lacerations are completely healed. Twenty-four hours must pass after an offence has been committed, before it can be punished; and when punishment is inflicted it must be in the presence of a competent witness, besides the person by whose authority it is inflicted.

Clause 13—prohibits the flogging of female slaves under any circumstances.

Clauses 14—21—direct, that on all plantations a record of punishments should be kept; specifying the crime which has been committed, and the kind and extent of punishment inflicted: the record to be signed by the parties present, and copies of this record, certified upon oath, to be regularly transmitted through the Protector to the Governor, in order to be sent to the Secretary of State. Severe penalties are also imposed for the neglect or falsification of this record, and the mode pointed out of bringing the master who inflicts an illegal punishment to justice.

Clause 22—provides for the intermarriage of slaves; and such marriage is made binding in law, whether celebrated by a Clergyman of the Church of England, by a Catholic Priest, or by a Dissenting Minister.

Clause 23—makes it unlawful, by any judicial process, to seize and sell, apart and separately from each other, the husband and wife, or reputed wife, or child under sixteen years of age.

Clauses 24—28—ordain, that the property of the slaves shall be secured to them by law; and savings banks are provided, in which to deposit their peculium; which they are allowed to transmit by will.

Clauses 29—34—abolish all taxes and fees on manumission, and give a power, which is adequately secured, to slaves, to purchase their freedom, or that of their children, at a fair appraisement, whenever they have the means of doing it.

Clauses 35, 36—ordain, that any slave, whom any clergyman, priest, or religious teacher, shall certify to understand the nature of an oath, shall be recorded as entitled to give evidence in courts of justice in all cases, except in civil suits where the master is concerned, or in trials affecting the life of a white man. It is also provided, however, that the power now possessed, by courts of criminal jurisdiction, of admitting slave evidence, shall not be diminished by this enactment.

Clauses 37—40—contain regulations respecting the office of Protector, or Assistant Protector of the Slave; and for preventing perjury in the execution of the Order in Council.

Clause 41—subjects any free person convicted of a misdemeanor under this act, to a fine of not less than £50, or more than £500; or to imprisonment for not less than one, or more than six months; or to both fine and imprisonment, at the discretion of the court convicting him. And if the conviction be for cruelty to a slave, the court may declare the property in such slave to be forfeited to the King. All fines are to be divided between the King and the prosecutor in equal moieties.

Clause 42—orders, that if any one shall be twice convicted of inflicting on any slave any cruel or unlawful punishment, he shall be declared by the court convicting him absolutely incapable of being the owner, or acting as the manager or overseer of a slave in the island; and all slaves belonging to him shall be forfeited to the King.

Now it is important to remark, that the various provisions of this order, with the exception of Clauses 35 and 36, relating to the evidence of slaves, were framed at the suggestion of the West India body in England. The plan was their's; it was adopted on their recommendation, and supported in

Parliament by their concurrence. Although it comprises many salutary regulations, it is essentially defective in several important respects. It still leaves to the master the power of inflicting arbitrary punishment with the whip, and still allows him, in the sale of his slaves, to tear asunder the tenderest ties of nature at pleasure.* As we might expect from the source in which it originated, all its provisions are framed with the most scrupulous care to avoid any kind of interference with the absolute right of property claimed by the planter.

Yet this Order, imposed by the authority of Government, and supported by the sanction of the West India body at home, has been resisted by the Planters of Trinidad, as an invasion of their most sacred rights, pregnant with inevitable ruin to all their interests.

The Order in Council, they assert, "has made an entire revolution in the system under which slaves were heretofore managed and governed." "Changes," they say, "are always to be deprecated, especially in a slave colony, where the whole of the labouring population are deprived of their natural rights; and nothing but the force of habit, and a brutish indistinct idea of the superiority and fixed power of their masters, keep them in awe and subjection." One great source of discomfort to the slave is stated to be the change produced by the Order in Council in the *old mode* of punishment, "so well established, recognized, and understood by the slave;" (alluding of course to the abolition of flogging as it respects the women, and of the driving whip as it respects both sexes). "By those," they remark, "who have most considered the subject in this colony, the use of the whip is believed to be identified with the existence of slavery."†

But in reply to these, and many other remonstrances of the Colonists, in which they seem almost at a loss for language strong enough to express their alarm, the Governor, Sir R. Woodford, whose instructions were peremptory, refuses to

* See Appendix A. of Second Anti-Slavery Report.

† See Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society.

suspend this Order, and affirms, what we have above stated, that “ the points comprised in it were recommended to his Majesty’s Government by the whole body of West India Planters and Merchants in London, as fit concessions on the part of the Slave Proprietors.”

If such was the spirit in which the Planters of Trinidad resisted the orders of Government, it was scarcely to be expected that the different Colonial Legislatures would shew a greater readiness in adopting the suggestions of the Ministers for the improvement of their Slave Code. In some of the islands they have absolutely refused to make any changes in accordance with these suggestions; in others, after professions of acquiescence, they have done nothing. In several, indeed, acts have been passed for amending the existing laws, but, with very few exceptions, these amendments have been of the most unsatisfactory description; and in many instances, this *ameliorated* slave code, as it is termed, has contained clauses so utterly at variance with every principle of justice, that they would have disgraced the statutes of the most barbarous age.

A few of these enactments will afford sufficient proof, if proof were yet wanting, how little is to be expected from the Colonists when they undertake to reform their own laws.

In Clause 40 of the New Consolidated Slave Code of the Bahamas, after all that has been said and written upon the subject, it has been re-enacted, “ That a negro or mulatto, who shall have been committed to gaol as a runaway, after having been confined and worked there for twelve months, shall, without any proof of his being a slave, and against the fair presumption of his being a free man, have the additional cruel and irreparable wrong inflicted upon him of being sold into perpetual bondage.*

Clause 69 contains the following enactment:—

“ Slaves receiving sentence of death or transportation,

* Slave Colonies of Great Britain, p. 10.

shall be appraised and valued. But if it shall appear that the owner of such slave had treated him or her with inhumanity, and that necessity or hard usage might have driven such slave to the commission of the offence of which he or she shall have been convicted;* then, no valuation shall be made, nor certificate granted; and the owner shall not be entitled to receive any allowance whatever for such slave from the public.†”

In reply to the remonstrances of Earl Bathurst on this and similar enactments, the Assembly observes, that “ a strong sense of the great impolicy and absolute danger of making any further innovations at present in the slave system of the colony, *and a decided conviction of the correctness of the principles on which they are now acting*, compel them to refuse to alter their legislation.”‡

In Barbadoes, two sessions have been consumed in debate and deliberation, and nothing has yet been done towards the reform of the Slave Code. The last session of their legislature opened with large promises, accompanied however with a spirit of violence and irritation even on the part of the professed reformers, which afforded but slender hope of their fulfilment. The very mover of the proposed reforms seemed to feel that he could not expect a hearing, without the most unmeasured abuse of the Abolitionists and their motives. “ The diabolical falsehoods and infamous aspersions of a few interested and designing hypocrites”—we quote verbatim from his speech, as reported in the West Indian newspapers of the day—“ moving in terrific

* “ Is it possible for any man to read, without amazement and horror, that though the convicted slave should have been proved to have been driven to his crime by necessity, or hard usage on the part of his master—a master possessing absolute and uncontrolled power—yet that the law does not order his sentence of condemnation to be reversed, but leaves him to be executed or transported, as the case may be; while the only punishment inflicted on the real criminal is, that he does not receive the value of the murdered slave.”—Slave Colonies of Great Britain, p. 12.

† See Slave Colonies of Great Britain, p. 11, 12.

‡ Ibid. p. 14.

phalanx to the total annihilation of the white inhabitants of the West Indies" marked them out in his opinion as a "vindictive crew," indulging "the abominable desire to cast headlong into the gulph of destruction, or endless misery, so large a portion of their fellow creatures, equally with themselves the followers of Christ. No justification can they have in their hellish design but that which originated and is fostered in their own dark and interested souls. Endeavour, however," he says to his co-legislators, "to tranquillize (as far as your natures will permit) those acute feelings which must agitate the breast of every enlightened and virtuous West Indian, against that detestable Institution which, keenly and immoveably bent upon your destruction, has, with consummate ingenuity, erected and set in motion against you a tremendous machinery, throwing out at each evolution misery and woe. Soar above prejudice, and leave far behind you slanderers and vilifiers; steadily steering your country through the muddy waters of bitter calumny, and leaving her safely moored in the bright and tranquil shores of truth. Discharge your duty, forgetting every cause of irritation. Follow the mild dictates of your religion: shew to your accursed enemies that they, with their empty theories, carry blood and cruelty, risking not one iota of their ill-gotten wealth, while you in your practice extend, at the risk of your very existence, the real benefits of heaven-beaming philanthropy."—But all the violence of this vituperation was insufficient to secure the slightest degree of popular favour in Barbadoes, to the man who had dared to innovate, however sparingly, on the sacred institutions of its slave code. The speech was followed by upwards of two months of deliberation in the Assembly on the bill which it introduced; but during this time the mover of it appears to have been assailed, out of doors, by every species of clamour and invective. He speaks of "the irritable working of parochial feeling, which, in its effervescence, had disturbed him in the course of his duties," and exhorts the House "to guard, with scrup-

pulous caution, against the influence of the feelings that are afloat without doors, agitating the minds of those who do not, cannot, will not, understand the question they exclaim against." He then alludes to the threatening tone which had been employed to deter him from his duty, and to the martyrdom to which he might possibly be called by the hostility of his constituents.

And what produced all this rage and violence on the part of the people of Barbadoes? A proposal merely to modify some of those cruel and sanguinary laws which had so long been the disgrace of its statute book. Under the influence, doubtless, of this popular feeling, the proposed amelioration law, on leaving the Assembly, and proceeding to the Council, was found to be still so disfigured by severity, and so defective in its provisions of protection to the slave, that the Council rejected it, as calculated to produce a more unfavourable impression of Barbadian humanity than if no change whatever had been attempted.*

In Barbadoes, however, a new slave law has, at length, been passed. Of this much-boasted act it has been justly remarked, that "it does not remove any of the obstructions to the manumission of slaves, nor does it enable slaves to purchase their freedom. It does not cause slaves to cease to be chattels, or prevent their being sold at the discretion of the owner, to the disruption of the dearest family ties. It provides no means of instruction for them, and does not abolish Sunday markets and Sunday labour. It does not protect them in the possession or transmission of their property; nor relieve them from the burden of legally proving their freedom when freed, nor legalize marriage among them; nor put an end to the driving system, or to the flogging of women; or to arbitrary punishments to an almost unlimited extent, for any offence or for no offence. The very provisions framed with a view to mitigate the rigours of their former

* See Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society.

state, avail but little to that purpose, while they serve to mark more unequivocally the depth of their degradation.”*

In Berbice nothing whatever appears to have been done in the work of reform. Governor Beard having pressed the subject at different times on the attention of the Council without effect, observes, in addressing Earl Bathurst, “I have no hope of the Council redeeming their pledge in this respect, or acceding in any manner to the proposed measures of his Majesty’s Government.”

In Bermuda, Demerara, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent, either nothing, or nothing in any degree satisfactory, has been done in reforming the slave code.†

In Tobago an Act containing some considerable improvements was passed—like the rest, however, it had many omissions and many objectionable clauses; but after Lord Bathurst’s remonstrances in regard to these, had been laid before the Colonial Legislature, the Governor, Sir F. P. Robinson, writes, that it is his decided opinion “that nothing more will be done towards the melioration of the condition of the slaves in this colony by the Legislature.”—He transmits, at the same time, a message from the House of Assembly rejecting the Order of Trinidad entirely.‡

But it is by the Legislature of Jamaica, the largest of our islands, and alone containing nearly one-half of our whole slave population, that the most determined hostility has been evinced to every proposition emanating from this country for ameliorating the condition of the slaves.

The only measure of reform which appears to have been introduced in consequence of the communication of Earl Bathurst’s propositions to the Assembly, was “a bill to enable slaves to give evidence in certain cases of crime committed against slaves, and of criminal attempts to excite rebel-

* *Slave Colonies*, p. 25.

† *Ibid.* *Passim*.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 103, 104.

lion and insurrection, and of uttering seditious language. But even this bill, though most jealously guarded, and extremely defective in its provisions, was thrown out by a majority of thirty-four to *one*!

The violence of opposition manifested by the Assembly, has been only exceeded by the still more unmeasured resistance of the Parish Vestries, and the absolute rage of the Journalists.

Not contented with heaping the most abusive epithets upon the different Members of the British Ministry, as well as upon the Abolitionists, a body of Planters in Jamaica, wholly unconscious of their own insignificance, have put forth a declaration, that “ *if the Commons’ House—and the Lords’ House—and the King at their head, were to join in making laws for the better treatment of the slaves, they should pay no other regard to their laws than to treat them with contempt.*” !!

As a general comment upon all the recent proceedings in the Colonies, as regards the proposals of the British Ministry, we extract the following from the Third Report of the Anti-Slavery Society, published Dec. 21, 1825.

“ The local Legislatures have refused, without a single exception, to comply even with the moderate requisitions of his Majesty’s Ministers, as these are embodied in the Order in Council for Trinidad; and the Colonists, generally, exult in the refusal, encouraging each other to persevere in the same contumacious course. Their tone of secure and triumphant irony is remarkable. ‘ We beg you to observe,’ says the editor of one of their newspapers—and we give the passage only as an illustration of the prevailing spirit—‘ We beg you to observe, that not one of the unconquered colonies’ (meaning the colonies having legislatures of their own) ‘ have had the *civility* to comply with Earl Bathurst’s wishes, notwithstanding he informed them, *in the most earnest and feeling* serious extent of the disappointment

*which his Majesty's Government would experience if they rejected his application. We sympathize most sincerely with his Lordship on this unexpected event.' "**

Such is the spirit in which the colonists have met the humane intentions of Government, and such are the laws which they have framed even when professing to act in accordance with them. Instead of being sensible that such laws outrage every principle of justice and feeling of humanity, they actually hold them forth as models of enlightened and beneficent legislation. But if the laws themselves be, as they are, a crime, what must be their administration in the hands of the men who framed them, and who do not blush to boast of them?

A reply to this question is furnished by a return recently made of the proceedings of the Fiscals of Demerara and Berbice, in their capacity of Guardians and Protectors of the Slaves.

The return from Demerara comprises a period of three months only, from June to September, 1824. The following are a few extracts:—

1. The Negroes of Plantation Big Diamond complain of ill treatment: three of the ringleaders are punished, "the complaint being unwarranted."

2. The Negroes of Plantation Friendship make the same complaint: four are punished, and all are sent back severely reprimanded.

3. Negroes of the Plantation la Bonna Mere make the same complaint: it is pronounced frivolous and unwarrantable, and seven of them are punished.

* Although the Government had thus already tried in vain the methods of recommendation and persuasion with the different Colonies, and although in this manner three years had been already consumed to no purpose, yet during the last year (1826) they have again condescended to send out propositions to the Colonial Legislatures, for their adoption, rejection, or modification. The fate of these is not yet decided, but from all the intelligence that has hitherto reached us, they do not appear to have been received by the Colonists in a better spirit than before.

4. The gangs of Plantation Belle Hope complain of ill usage, hard work, starvation, &c. : the complaint is pronounced frivolous and ill-founded, and three of the ring-leaders are punished.

5. Izak, of Plantation Fowlis, complains of ill treatment: he is punished.

6. George makes a like complaint: he is to go to his work, and to be punished.

7. A woman and boy complain of want of clothing and ill treatment: unfounded: the woman confined eight days, the boy flogged.

General Murray, the late Governor of Demerara, well known by the share he had in the prosecution of Smith the Missionary, has two estates in Berbice, Resolution and Buses Lust. On the 23d of October, 1821, the manager of the former estate, Hopkins, was reprov'd by the Fiscal for having given three successive floggings to a negro named Mark, who states

“ He has been flogged severely by the manager, on account of complaining he was sick, three different times; once 12, another time 39, and again 25 lashes have been inflicted; shews marks of severe flogging, and much neglected.”

On the 29th of November there is another complaint from the same estate.

Michael says he is a negro, and knows very well he must work; but that they work from morning till late in the evening picking coffee, “ and when he comes home, between six and seven in the evening, instead of going home to get some victuals, he is ordered to work till twelve at night, bringing mud from one place to another. Also on Sundays they are ordered to work, and if they should refuse they would be flogged.”

Philip makes a similar complaint.

Thomas says “ he is an old man, and the work that the manager gives him to do it is impossible for him to complete,

from the weakness of his body and state; for which he is always punished, and kept continually in the stocks."

The result of the complaints made to the Fiscal is seldom given. In this instance it is given in very laconic terms, and will doubtless surprise our readers—" *Two directed to receive SEVENTY-FIVE lashes.*"

On the 3d of March, 1823, nine Negroes, all women, belonging to Plantation Port Moraunt, appeared to complain of the manager, that they are "constantly in the field from morning before gun-fire until late in the evening; that the work the manager gives is too much; that they are unable to complete it, although they work during breakfast time."

"Sometimes they are obliged to work on Sunday to finish the task given during the week; and often have no time to eat from morning till night; if the row is not finished they are put in the stocks, and kept in until morning, when they are released and sent to work; sometimes the whole of the women are flogged for the sake of two or three not finishing their task. Last Friday the driver was flogged on account of his having allowed the women to come to the house to get breakfast, and they were sent all back to their work; the manager saying to them that they had time to eat at night, and not in the day. On Saturday last the manager went to the field, and found that they had not finished their row, and immediately ordered four women to be flogged."

"On investigation of this complaint," observes the Fiscal, who, be it remembered, is himself a planter, "it appeared,

"That although the tasks given to the negroes of the estate were not actually more than they could do in a day, yet that the manager was very severe upon them, and too frequently inflicted punishment without sufficient cause; he was therefore informed that his conduct would be vigilantly looked after in future; and if he continued the same system, the attorney of the estate would be recommended to discharge him from the management."

Such was the result of these acknowledged atrocities.

The following complaint from the same estate was heard on the 27th of March, 1823, and the result will further illustrate the course of judicial proceedings in the Slave Colonies.

“Ness states that he is the driver over the women, and the manager asked him last Sunday why he did not go to work, and he answered that he had not been ordered to do so, or he would have gone to work, as he did not wish to do any thing without the manager’s order. The manager then offered to flog him: but he made his escape, and came to your Honour for redress.

“*The complainant in this instance was punished by the acting Fiscal for having left the estate and come to town to complain without any cause, and when he knew he had been guilty of disobedience of orders and neglect of duty; and the manager was warned of the impropriety and illegality of working the negroes on Sunday.*”*

The manager is not punished for so flagrant a breach of the law, but warned of its impropriety! The poor negro is punished!

No better comment can be made on such atrocious proceedings than that of the murdered Missionary Smith. “If it be asked,” said he, in speaking of the cruel treatment of the slaves in Demerara—“If it be asked, Are there not authorities to whom the injured slaves can appeal for redress? The answer is in the affirmative. But many of the legally constituted authorities are themselves owners of plantations, following the same system, and perhaps, by means of their

* Since last year, the Fiscal of Berbice, at the express desire of the Council of that Colony, has transmitted to this country an official vindication of the Report in which the above facts are related. It is drawn up with the avowed object of *rebutting* the charges against West Indian humanity and justice which had been founded on the original Report; but so far from succeeding in this object, it tends to confirm, and even to aggravate those charges. By far the most atrocious and horrid of the statements contained in the report are incontestibly proved and even admitted to have been true.—For a Review of this vindication, see Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. 16.

managers, practising the same abuses on their slaves. Judging from their conduct, it would seem that some of them consider it a greater crime for the negroes to complain of their wrongs, than for the master to *inflict* them. The complainants are almost sure to be flogged, and frequently before the complaint is investigated, if listening to the exculpatory tale of the master can be called investigation; and even when the cause is so evidently on the side of the complainant that it can neither be denied nor evaded, the decision is so studiously concealed from them, that they scarcely know whether the law is to protect the oppressed or to indemnify the oppressor; nor can they always solve this problem from the result."

But it is time to leave this part of our subject. Enough, and more than enough has been stated to prove, in the language of one of our most distinguished statesmen, "that the masters of slaves are not to be trusted in what concerns legislation for slavery. That, however specious their laws may appear, they must be ineffectual in their operation," because "there is something in the nature of absolute authority, in the relation between master and slave, which makes despotism in *all* cases, and under *all* circumstances, an incompetent and unsure executor even of its own provisions in favour of the objects of its power."

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE BENEFIT WHICH WOULD ARISE FROM CULTIVATING TROPICAL PRODUCTIONS BY FREE LABOUR.

IN taking a review of the foregoing details, what a dark and discouraging prospect is presented to us. The persevering efforts of the great and good men who first befriended the African race have, it is true, after a long protracted struggle, obtained from the Legislature of Great Britain the entire Abolition of the Slave Trade; that Trade has been declared Piracy by Great Britain and by the United States of America; most of the European Powers have consented to relinquish it; and England has long kept an armed naval force upon the coast of Africa to enforce its abandonment by the subjects of other nations as well as by her own. But all has been in vain. The scourge of this abominable traffic still desolates the shores of Africa as widely as ever, while the crimes and horrors which attend it have been aggravated rather than diminished.

But the legalized state of Slavery in our own dominions, as depicted in the preceding pages, is a system of injustice and oppression no less atrocious than the Slave Trade itself.

We have become convinced of this: we have found it impossible to contemplate its revolting features without the liveliest emotions of shame and indignation; and we have endeavoured—the Government and the People of this Country have strenuously endeavoured to mitigate its evils.

But here, also, our efforts have been exerted in vain.

The humane recommendations of the British Ministry have been met by an obstinate and contemptuous opposition on the part of the Colonists, whose conduct has declared, in terms the most distinct and explicit, that, as far as in them

lies, they will preserve and perpetuate the worst abuses of slavery.

Under the influence of such considerations, we seem almost compelled to abandon in despair the cause of the Negro and the interests of humanity. We are almost ready to believe that he has been destined by some unalterable decree to remain for ever the victim of oppression. But to admit such an opinion would be an imputation upon the justice of the Deity, in the moral government of the universe, wholly at variance with his known attributes, and we are, therefore, induced to hope, that he has provided, by some method as yet but little regarded, for the entire extinction of slavery.

In the ordinary course of human affairs, the interest and the duty of mankind appear to be in general inseparably connected—in contradicting the will of our Creator, we seldom fail to disappoint our own. As, therefore, no system at variance with the laws of God, and injurious to his rational creation, can ever be ultimately beneficial to those who carry it on, we should, on these considerations alone, be authorised in concluding that Slavery, accompanied as it is, in every stage of its existence, by rapine, injustice, and oppression, must disappoint the selfish aims of those who think themselves interested in maintaining it.

Man, as he proceeded from the hands of his Creator, and in the exercise of that freedom which is his birth-right, is of far greater value than when enslaved, and degraded to the condition of a brute. In the one case, “his exertions are animated by hope; in the other, depressed by despair: in the one they are sustained by the energies of nature, in the other extorted by the mechanical operation of the lash;” and for these reasons the industry of freedom may be confidently presumed to be more productive than that of slavery, and by a natural consequence, more beneficial to those who employed it and put it in motion.

It is believed that the facts which we are about to bring

forward will establish, to the conviction of every candid and dispassionate enquirer, the truth of the axiom—

“That the labour of the Free Man is cheaper than that of the Slave.”

In tracing the important consequences which result from this general principle, we shall have frequent occasion to admire the consummate wisdom which has provided by means so simple, a complete ultimate remedy for the grossest system of wrong which human villany ever invented. We shall turn with heartfelt delight from the crimes and miseries of man, from the feeble efforts of human benevolence, and the misdirected or abortive exertions of human power, to contemplate the silent, but irresistible operation of those laws which have been appointed in the counsels of Providence to terminate the oppressions of the African race.

“The expence of slave labour,” says Adam Hodgson, in his valuable letter to J. B. Say, on the comparative value of Free and Slave Labour, “resolves itself into the annual sum which, in the average term of the productive years of a slave’s life, will liquidate the cost of purchase or rearing, and support in old age, if he attain it, with interest, and the sum annually expended in his maintenance.

“If we omit the case of purchased slaves, and suppose them to be bred on the estate (and as breeding is now admitted to be, under ordinary circumstances, the cheapest mode of supply, your argument will gain by the supposition), the expence of free labour will resolve itself into precisely the same elements, since the wages paid to free labourers of every kind, must be such as to enable them, one with another, to bring up a family and continue their race.”

Now it is observed by Adam Smith, “the wear and tear of a free servant is equally at the expence of his master, and it generally costs him much less than that of a slave. The fund destined for replacing and repairing, if I may say so, the wear and tear of a slave, is commonly managed by a

negligent master or careless overseer. That destined for performing the same office with regard to the free man, is managed by the free man himself. The disorders which generally prevail in the economy of the rich, naturally introduce themselves into the management of the former; the strict frugality and parsimonious attention of the poor, as naturally establish themselves in that of the latter." The Russian political economist, Storch, who had carefully examined the system of slavery in that extensive empire, makes the same remark, almost in the same words. Hume expresses a similar opinion in decided terms; and I have now before me a statement from one of the slave districts in the United States, in which it is estimated that, taking the purchase money, or the expence of rearing a slave, with the cost of his maintenance, at their actual rates, and allowing fifteen years of health and strength, during which to liquidate the first cost, his labour will be at least twenty-five per cent. dearer than that of the free labourer in the neighbouring districts.

From the preceding particulars it appears highly probable that the cost of rearing and maintaining a slave would render his labour, under ordinary circumstances at least, as oppressive as that of the free labourer, but in addition to this it would be far less productive.

"The slave," says Storch, "working always for another, and never for himself, being limited to a bare subsistence, and seeing no prospect of improving his condition, loses all stimulus to exertion, he becomes a machine, often very obstinate, and very difficult to manage. A man who is not rewarded in proportion to the labour he performs, works as little as he can; this is an acknowledged truth, which the experience of every day confirms. Let a free labourer work by the day, he will be indolent; pay him by the piece, he will often work to excess, and ruin his health. If this observation is just in the case of the free labourer, it must be still more so in that of the slave."

Hume remarks, " I shall add, from the experience of our planters, that slavery is as little advantageous to the master as to the man. The fear of punishment will never draw so much labour from a slave, as the dread of being turned off, and not getting another service, will give a free man."

Burke observes, in his *Treatise on European Settlements*, " I am the more convinced of the necessity of these indulgences, as slaves certainly cannot go through so much work as free men. The mind goes a great way in every thing, and when a man knows that his labour is for himself, and that the more he labours, the more he is to acquire; this consciousness carries him through, and supports him beneath fatigues, under which he would otherwise have sunk."

" That the proprietors of West India estates," observes Dr. Beattie, " would be in any respect materially injured by employing free servants (if these could be had) in their several manufactures, is highly improbable, and has, indeed, been absolutely denied by those who were well informed on this subject. A clergyman of Virginia assured me, that a white man does double the work of a slave; which will not seem wonderful, if we consider that the former works for himself, and the latter for another; that by the law, one is protected, the other oppressed; and that in the articles of food and clothing, relaxation and rest, the free man has innumerable advantages. It may, therefore, be presumed, that if all who serve in the colonies were free, the same work would be performed by half the number which is now performed by the whole."

Koster, in his *Travels in the Brazils*, observes, " the slave trade is impolitic, on the broad principle that a man in a state of bondage will not be so serviceable to the community as one who acts for himself, and whose whole exertions are directed to the advancement of his own fortune; the creation of which by regular means adds to the general prosperity of the society to which he belongs. This undoubted and indis-

putable fact must be still more strongly impressed on the mind of every one who has been in the habit of seeing the manner in which slaves perform their daily labour. Their indifference, and the extreme slowness of every movement, plainly point out the trifling interest which they have in the advancement of the work. I have watched two parties labouring in the same field, one of free persons, the other of slaves, which occasionally, though very seldom, occurs. The former are singing, joking, and laughing, and are always actively turning hand and foot; whilst the latter are silent, and if they are viewed from a little distance, their movements are scarcely to be perceived.”*

Dr. Dickson, who resided in Barbadoes as Secretary to the late Honourable Edward Hay, the Governor of that island, observes, “that it has been known for many ages, by men of reflection, that the labour of slaves, whether bought or bred, though apparently cheaper, is really far dearer in general than that of free men.”

From a calculation made under the guidance of M. Coulomb, an able mathematician and experienced engineer, who conducted extensive building works both in France and the West Indies, he infers, “that field slaves do only between a third and a half of the work despatched by reluctant French soldiers, and probably not more than a third of what those very slaves would do if urged by their own interest.

“I must additionally refer,” remarks the same intelligent writer, “to an excellent pamphlet entitled *Observations on Slavery*, published in 1788, and now out of print, by my late worthy friend, Dr. James Anderson, who shews, that the labour of a West India slave costs about *thrice* as much as it would cost if executed by a free man. Taking another case, he demonstrates that if the labour of certain colliers in Scotland, who, till our own times, were subjected to a mild kind of vassalage, regulated by law, was *twice* as dear as that of the free

* Hedgson’s Letter to Say, p. 8.

men who wrought in other coal mines in the same country, and *thrice* as dear as common day-labour.”*

If slave labour were cheaper than free labour, we might confidently presume that estates would be rendered less productive by the emancipation of the slaves which cultivated them; but the presumption is contradicted by experience.

“ A few Polish Nobles,” observes Coxe, in his *Travels in Poland*, “ of benevolent hearts and enlightened understandings, have acted upon different principles, and have ventured upon the expedient of giving liberty to their vassals. The event has shewn this to be no less judicious than humane, no less friendly to their own interests than to the happiness of the peasants; for it appears that in the districts in which the new arrangement has been introduced, the population of their villages has been considerably increased, and the revenues of their estates augmented in a triple proportion.

“ The first noble who granted freedom to his peasants was Zamoiski, formerly Great Chancellor, who, in 1761, enfranchised six villages in the palatinate of Masovia. These villages were, in 1777, visited by the author of the patriotic letters, from whom I received the following information :—

“ On inspecting the parish registers of births from 1750 to 1760, that is, during the ten years of slavery immediately preceding their enfranchisement, he found the births 434; in the first ten years of their freedom, from 1760 to 1770, 628; and from 1770 to the beginning of 1777, 585. By these extracts it appeared that during the

First period, there were only 43 births	} each year.
Second ditto, 62 ditto	
Third ditto, 77 ditto	

“ The revenues of the six villages, since their enfranchisement, have been augmented in a much greater proportion than their population. In the state of vassalage, Zamoiski was obliged, according to the custom of Poland, to build

* See Hodgson's Letter, p. 9, 10.

cottages and barns for his peasants, and to furnish them with food, horses, and ploughs, and every implement of agriculture. Since their enfranchisement, they are become so easy in their circumstances, as to provide themselves with all these necessaries at their own expence, and they likewise cheerfully pay an annual rent in lieu of the manual labour formerly exacted by their master. *By these means, the receipts of this particular estate have been nearly tripled.*

“The example of Zamoiski has been followed by Chrep-towitz, Vice-Chancellor of Lithuania, and the Abbe Bryzolowski, with similar success. Prince Stanislaus, the King of Poland, has warmly patronised the plan of giving liberty to the peasants. He has enfranchised four villages not far from Warsaw, in which he has not only emancipated the peasants from their slavery, but even condescends to direct their affairs. He explained to me, in the most satisfactory manner, that the grant of freedom was no less advantageous to the lord than to the peasant, provided the former is willing to superintend their conduct for a few years, and to put them in the way of acting for themselves. He intends giving the public a particular account of his arrangements, and will shew how much he has increased the value of his estate, as well as the happiness of his peasants.”

In Hungary a similar experiment has been made of emancipating the vassals, and with the same success.

Count Festetics, an Hungarian nobleman, having purchased an estate in the Murakös, a tract of country between the Muhr and the Drave, granted lands to the peasantry at a fixed annual rent, instead of the common tenure of service. In these free villages the value of land has risen to such a degree, that the owner of four acres is esteemed wealthy, and the population has increased from fifty families to six hundred. Although still subject to the government duties, and suffering from the effects of two bad seasons and an inundation of the Drave, these peasants were, in 1814, striving cheerfully with the difficulties of their situation, while their

neighbours, on the common footing, although each family possessed *thirty* acres, were reduced to subsist on the bounty of their lord. Those free villages, also, afford an exception to the general dishonesty of the Hungarian peasantry ; their household furniture is often exposed on the outside of the cottages, and does not even require the protection of the large dogs common in the rest of the country.*

It is stated in the Supplement to the Report of the Privy Council, in reply to the 17th of the Queries from his Excellency Governor Parry, answered by the Hon. Joshua Steel, a planter of 1068 acres in the parishes of St. John, St. Philip, and St. George, in the island of Barbadoes—"On a plantation of 288 slaves, in June, 1780, viz. 90 men, 82 women, 56 boys, and 60 girls, there were only 15 births, and no less than 57 deaths, in three years and three months. An alteration was made in the mode of governing the slaves, the whips were taken from all the white servants, all arbitrary punishments were abolished, and all offences were tried, and sentence passed by a negro court. *In four years and three months*, under this change of government, there were 44 births, and only 41 deaths, of which 10 deaths were of superannuated men and women, and past labour, some above 80 years old. *But, in the same interval, the annual nett clearance of the estate was above three times more than it had been for ten years before.*"

The preceding facts and authorities form but a very small portion of what can be adduced in support of our position—that the Labour of the Free Man is cheaper than that of the Slave.

Should the reader desire a more copious illustration of this interesting subject, he will find it in the valuable pamphlet to which we have so often referred, and from which the above passages have been chiefly extracted. He can scarcely,

* See Bright's Travels in Hungary.

however, avoid being struck with the surprising coincidence which exists between all the facts that we have cited, although occurring under very different circumstances, and in situations widely distant from each other; or fail to acknowledge that they are of themselves sufficient to establish, in the clearest and most convincing manner, the important principle for which we are contending.

We are authorised, therefore, in assuming it as a general rule, that the employment of Slave Labour is destructive to the interests of the master. This rule admits of only one exception. In countries possessing a large quantity of rich unoccupied soil, the temporary views of the land-owner may be promoted by the system of slavery, notwithstanding its general disadvantages.

Land can have no value without people, and its fertility may be so great as to counterbalance the disadvantages of slave labour. Where land is so easily obtained, a man will rather work for himself than become the hired labourer of another, and from this circumstance, the wages of free labour may be so high as to be more expensive than the labour of slaves.

These considerations will explain the reason why the land-owners of Illinois attempted to obtain the introduction of slavery into that newly inhabited state.

But this state of things cannot continue long. As population increases, all the richer lands become occupied; the difficulty of obtaining hired labourers is at an end; and the wages of free labour, in consequence, soon reach that point at which it becomes, as in other cases, the interest of the cultivator to employ it in preference to slave labour.

If, however, blind to his own interest, he continue to persist in his impolitic system of slave cultivation, the natural fertility of the soil may be so great as to enable him to do so without absolute ruin to himself. But even this advantage will soon fail him, for, by an admirable provision of the Author of Nature, slave cultivation has an invariable tendency

to lessen the fertility of the soil. In a manner which at first sight appears almost miraculous, the earth refuses to lend her support to a system of injustice; and while “ she multiplies her productions with profusion under the hands of a free-born labourer, seems to shrink into barrenness under the sweat of the slave.” The causes of this extraordinary fact will be made clear to us by a few very simple considerations.

It is well known that a continual succession of the same crops will deteriorate the richest soils. To maintain their fertility it is necessary to have recourse to green crops and the pasturage of cattle; and in the natural course of things under the influence of freedom, the demands of a civilized community make it the interest of the cultivator to devote a considerable portion of his land to these purposes.

But under a system of slavery his interests are widely different. He has then no inducement to rear cattle. The labour usually assigned to them in a free country is performed by his slaves, and he has therefore no need of their living services. They would be equally useless to him when dead, because beef and mutton are luxuries almost wholly denied to the slave, who is obliged to content himself with the cheapest and coarsest food which can support life. In other respects they would be of little or no value to him, because the wants of a slave population are not considered to require either leather or woollen cloth, or any of those comforts which the free man derives so largely from the animals whose flesh supplies him with food.

For these reasons, in slave countries it is the constant practice to persevere in a ruinous succession of the same exhausting crops, and the productiveness of the soil is, in consequence, gradually diminished. In our West India islands this has taken place universally; in the United States the same effects have arisen from the same cause. Even in countries where the population, although not actually enslaved, has been long degraded by oppression to a condition

nearly allied to slavery, the same fact has been exhibited in a very extraordinary manner.

A late traveller in Greece remarked with astonishment, that many districts of this beautiful region, once distinguished by their exuberant fertility, were now become barren and unproductive.*

It appears, therefore, that by an almost necessary consequence, slavery produces a system of cultivation destructive to the fertility of the soil. When from the influence of these causes the estate of the planter has been impoverished, economy and good management become indispensable. "But it is found," says Hodgson, "by the experience of both ancient and modern times, that nothing has tended more to assimilate the condition of the slave to that of the free labourer, or actually to effect his emancipation, than the necessity imposed by circumstances of adopting the most economical mode of cultivation."

The first step in the progress of the ancient bondsmen of Europe "from a state of slavery to that of freedom," has been generally marked by the introduction of Task-work, or of a system which required a certain quota of labour, or the fruits of labour, from the slave, on condition of allowing him to enjoy the overplus of his industry.

In the United States this system has been already adopted, with unquestionable advantage to the slave; nothing, indeed, can conduce more immediately to the excitement of his voluntary efforts. "It seems the natural and easy transition from labour to industry; it forms in the mind of the slave those habits which are necessary for the character of the free man: it thus prepares him for enjoying, by a gradual change, those rights and privileges which belong to freedom."†

The same necessity of having recourse to the most economical mode of cultivation, will induce the planter to adopt many other considerable improvements. He has been hither-

* On this subject see *Support of Slavery Investigated*. By J. Cropper.

† See Hodgson's Letter to Say. *Passim*.

to accustomed to have recourse to the sinews of the slave for every thing; but he will soon learn that his interest may be greatly promoted by employing the labour of cattle *more*, and that of man *less*, by making use of the plough, and availing himself of the various modes of diminishing human labour, adopted with such great advantage in every free community.

He will next quickly discover “how much his interest is connected with the comfort of his slave; how much more profitable it is to divide with him the fruits of his free and strenuous exertions, than to monopolize the scanty produce of his compulsory toil. The rights of property, and the secure enjoyment of the fruits of labour will soon be extended to him, and the progress of his improvement will become constant and visible.”

But slavery is a system so radically vicious and bad, that oppression and cruelty are necessary to its very existence, and every alleviating circumstance, every permanent intermixture of better principles, hastens that existence to a close. The moment you succeed in mitigating its harsher features, the moment you raise the slave to a more elevated condition in society, you provide, by an easy and natural course of things, for the ultimate and complete extinction of slavery.

As slaves, when well treated, increase as rapidly as free men, the natural consequence of that improvement in their condition which has been shewn to arise out of the interests of the master, will be an increase in the numbers of the slave population; and when a population becomes so numerous that it is difficult to find employment for them, slavery must soon cease.

A surplus population in a free country produces a rate of wages so low, that great industry and good management are necessary to earn a subsistence. Under such circumstances, *man can never possess any saleable value*, since it is obvious that his purchaser must be at the expence of supplying him

with the means of support ; that is, he must give him all which his free and strenuous exertions could have obtained, before he can derive any benefit from his industry.

Ireland is at present in this situation, and let us mark the consequence. Instead of considering a poor Irishman of any value as property, we are willing to incur considerable expence in transporting him to a distant land.

In a state of slavery the course of things would be precisely the same. As soon as the slaves had increased beyond the usual means of employment, the desire of the planter to render their services valuable would induce him to have them instructed in various arts and manufactures, in order to make for himself many things which he has hitherto been accustomed to procure at a greater expence elsewhere. “ During this state of things, the industry, the knowledge, and the habits of the slaves would be constantly improving by extended and varied employments ; and necessity, or a desire to enjoy the fruits of their labour, would soon be found to operate just the same in warm as in cold climates ; and would be gradually, but constantly, fitting them for freedom at the time when, from an increase of their numbers, or other circumstances, they would cease to have any saleable value ; and when it would be a great hardship on their masters to compel them any longer to hold them in slavery.”*

It is in this manner that slavery has been silently brought

* Support of Slavery Investigated, p. 23.

The late returns from the West Indies strongly confirm this part of our argument. The Bahamas have an unproductive soil, and slaves are comparatively of little value ; but there the slave population is rapidly increasing. Demerara is productive, slaves sell very high, and yet they rapidly decrease. Barbadoes lies between the two extremes.—The following statement will shew the relative price of the slave, with the annual increase or decrease, and the annual number of manumissions in every 10,000 of the population in each of these three islands.

	<i>Price.</i>	<i>Manumissions.</i>	<i>Increase.</i>	<i>Decrease.</i>
Bahamas	£22	35	173	
Barbadoes	£28	12	33	
Demerara	£88	4½	—	166

to a termination in those countries of Europe where it has now ceased to exist. It is thus that it has been nearly extinguished in the East Indies, where, if any claims to servitude remain, we are assured by unexceptionable authority, that they are not enforced, because, from the cheapness of free labour, they are not worth enforcing.

But, granting the correctness of all we have hitherto been urging, it will now very naturally be asked—If free labour be cheaper than slave labour, why have not the obvious interests of the master, in all cases, induced him to have recourse to it? Why has not slavery itself already terminated, or, if it will thus terminate by the operation of natural causes alone, if it will die a natural death, why should we urge it to a sudden and perhaps premature dissolution?

In reply to these objections, it should be remembered, that man does not always act with an enlightened view to self-interest; “an old system is frequently not improved until not only a better is known, but also until *necessity* compels its adoption, and, least of all, are men to be expected to make changes which involve a voluntary resignation of power and dominion over their fellow-creatures. A bad system may exist as long as a very high price is obtained for the article produced. The high prices of Tropical productions on their first introduction into Europe, admitted of an expensive system. These prices were so high as to support slave cultivation in the absence of the planters from the management of their own concerns, an absence producing neglect, waste, and extravagance, which could not succeed in any other branch of the agriculture, commerce, or manufactures of this or any other country,”*

In the United States it is probable the unfettered competition of free labour would soon put an end to slavery, did not the large tracts of rich unoccupied land in the back settlements, occasion such a constant drain of the population

* Support of Slavery Investigated, p. 4.

from the Old States as to counteract its effects, and even to produce an internal slave trade notoriously extensive.

In the West India Colonies of Great Britain, the productions of slave labour are maintained at a monopoly price by the bounties and protecting duties imposed and granted by this country for the benefit of the Planters ; who have thus been enabled to continue their impolitic and oppressive system beyond the period at which it must, in the natural course of things, have given way to one more enlightened.

The West Indian monopoly is at present supported, first, by a bounty of upwards of six shillings per cwt.* on the export of refined sugar, and which necessarily raises the price not only of all such sugar exported, but of all the sugar consumed at home, to the extent of the bounty ; and secondly, a protecting duty of ten shillings a cwt. more on East Indian than on West Indian sugar ; thus favouring sugar grown by slave labour, in preference to that grown by free labour, to the extent of about 50 per cent. on the cost of the article, and tending to exclude the latter from our consumption, and to force us to consume the former. On coffee also the West Indies have a protection of 28s. a cwt. Now, to say nothing at present of the degree in which prices are raised by the operation of the protecting duty, the cost of the West Indian monopoly, arising from the sugar bounty alone, may be estimated at about £1,200,000 annually.† And it is this large

* This bounty has been reduced during the last Session of Parliament to 8s. per cwt. ; the amount of the protecting duty still remains the same.

† This position has been questioned. It has been affirmed that the bounty, the extent of which is not denied, affects only the sugar which is exported. But such a statement can alone proceed from an entire ignorance of the facts of the case. The price of the sugar consumed in this country, and of that which is refined for exportation, is precisely the same in the sugar market. The bounty necessarily operates on the whole mass of sugar, as there cannot exist at the same moment, two prices of one article in the same market. The point, however, if there could exist a doubt upon it (though such a doubt cannot possibly exist in the mind of any commercial man), is fully conceded by the West Indians themselves. Mr. George Hibbert, the

sum (in addition to whatever enhancement of price may be produced by the protecting duty) paid by the people of this country to the growers of sugar, over and above what that sugar would otherwise cost, which does in fact chiefly maintain unimpaired and unreformed the wretched system of colonial bondage. The People of England are therefore the real upholders of Negro Slavery. Without their large contribution to its support, it could not fail to be rapidly mitigated, and eventually extinguished. It is absolutely vain, therefore, to be hoping to abolish slavery, or to expect that by the vehemence of our speeches, or the force of mere Parliamentary resolutions, or of Royal recommendations, we shall be able to abate this evil, while we are extending to it such solid marks of our favour, and thus affording to it its great and principal means of support.

It is calculated that there are in the West Indies about 1800 sugar plantations; among the proprietors of which the twelve hundred thousand pounds which the people of this country are forced to pay for their sugars, over and above what the same sugars would cost them if the trade were free, is of course divided, making on the average about £700 sterling annually to each proprietor; and this independently of the advantage, whatever it be, which he derives from the protecting duty. Now if it were proposed in Parliament to give to each of these 1800* West Indian proprietors pensions, varying in their amount from £500 to £5000 a year,

Agent of the island of Jamaica, in a letter to his constituents, dated the 11th of March, 1824, and published in the Royal Gazette of Jamaica of the 1st of May, 1824, distinctly states, that “ *the advantage which we now enjoy in the principle and produce of calculating the drawback upon the export of refined sugar, taken altogether, is little, if at all short of a gratuitous bounty of six shillings per hundred weight.*”—See Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society.

For a full explanation of the nature and effects of this bounty, see Relief of West Indian Distress. By James Cropper.

* This number is said to be over-rated by more than 200; if so, the case here stated would be greatly strengthened.

according to the quantity of sugar which each might extract by means of the cart-whip, from the labour of his slaves; and forming a total aggregate of one million two hundred thousand pounds, what reception would such a proposition meet with? Would it be tolerated for a single moment? And yet wherein does the actual state of things differ substantially from the case which has been supposed, except that, in this last, the transaction would stand forth to the public view in all its flagrancy, while, in the other, it is more concealed from observation; and that, in the one case, the money would be paid by the people into the Exchequer, before it went into the pockets of the sugar planters; and that, in the other, it is paid to them through the grocers in the price of their sugars. The payment is not the less real on that account.*

We repeat, then, that the People of England are the real upholders of Negro Slavery—"in opposition to the dictates of humanity, the precepts of religion, and the principles of political economy and impartial justice, we contribute more to perpetuate our own disgrace, than it would be deemed prudent to bestow in the purchase of the greatest blessing. All our plans of domestic improvement, joined to all the efforts which we make for the diffusion of religion and virtue in foreign nations—our Schools, our Bible Societies, and our Missions, justly considered as the peculiar glory of the age—cost us a mere scantling, compared to what is annually devoted to that very pious and benevolent object, the perpetuation of Slavery in the West Indies;—we throw mites into the treasury of the sanctuary, and heap ingots on the altar of Moloch."†

Great as this pecuniary sacrifice is, it is not all that we are called upon to make; we are called upon to support a system, the effects of which have ever been to hinder the progress of improvement, and to spread barbarism in its stead; a system every where marked by the destruction of

* Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society.

† See Address of the Leicester Anti-Slavery Society.

the very soil, and still more by its tendency to the destruction of every virtuous and moral feeling, no less in the master than in the slave. We are called upon to bind down the energies of the country, and to exclude that competition which would certainly destroy this wretched system. The rapid extension of our commerce since its opening with South America and India, cramped and restricted as it still is, is abundantly sufficient to shew what that extension might have been under a conduct governed by more liberal and enlightened views. We have seen, for instance, the cotton trade, not only giving full employment to the population of the districts in England where it is now carried on, but, since the removal of some absurd regulations, we have seen with delight some branches of this trade extending to Ireland, and presenting the best means of improving and raising her depressed population ! Had we but employed the means within our power, of diffusing employment, civilization, and comfort, over the regions of Asia, Africa, and America, we should long since have received in return, employment and comfort for the suffering and depressed, though generous-minded population of Ireland ! and even now, if we will but pursue this policy, we shall soon reap an abundant reward.

But it might at least have been expected, that in sacrificing such immense national advantages, we should have had some manifest and palpable compensation in the enormous wealth and unparalleled prosperity of those for whose benefit the sacrifice is made. Is then the present system of colonial cultivation advantageous to the planters ? If it be, of what do they complain ? Have they not the unrestrained use and full controul of their slaves ? Have they not the privilege of importing their produce at a less duty than other countries ? Have they not bounties also on its re-exportation ? Yet we hear every day that West Indian cultivation is no longer profitable, and that, without further sacrifices on the part of the mother country, the planters will be ruined. But can the planters suppose that this country is prepared to

make these further sacrifices? to submit to still heavier burthens for no other purpose than to support an unjust system, which is at the same time unprofitable, not only to the country but to themselves? Instead of looking any longer for such ruinous support, let them employ the means of improvement which are amply within their power. Let them examine what it is that enables their competitors to undersell them, and they will soon perceive the immense advantages of free over slave labour.*

But the real cause of their present distress may be readily discovered in the gross system of mismanagement to which our bounties and protections have given rise. In a petition to Parliament from the island of Antigna, in a late Session, the produce and expences of an estate are stated, in which about *two hundred and fifty pounds* are charged for oversight and management; the value of all its produce being, in the general markets of Europe and unaided by English bounty, only about £1050 sterling. Let the English landholder say if he could afford to pay such a sum for the oversight and management of 150 to 200 acres of land, which would yield as much gross produce; or, if he did pay it, whether he would not soon be under the necessity of mortgaging his estate.†

The non-residence of the Planters is also a peculiar evil of the British Colonial system.

That the residence of many of the land-owners of Ireland would improve their own revenues, and, still more, the condition of the Irish people, is a point which *few* would be

* Impolicy of Slavery.

† The following is one instance of this gross mismanagement. *Bricks* are enumerated in the Antigua petition among the supplies imported from this country. In deriving his supply of this article from this source, the *Proprietor of Slaves* pays from 5s. to 7s. 6d. per day to the *free labourer* of England for making them; notwithstanding the *gross amount* of the produce raised by the labour of 140 slaves, even with the benefit of the bounty, is only £1,427, or less than 7d. per day for the labour of each slave! !—See Relief of West Indian Distress.

found to dispute; and, on the other hand, that if they were to cultivate their own lands, and to attempt to raise cattle and corn by the agency of attorneys and overseers, they could not reasonably expect any revenues at all! And, in such a case, surely no one would be found to propose to give them a bounty to enable them to continue so improvident a system; yet this is what we actually do in regard to the West India planters.*

But the oppression and misery, and the consequent destruction of human life, which this system occasions, is the most appalling of all its consequences.

With prices of produce sometimes so low as not to pay for the importation of slaves, the slave population of the United States has augmented nearly one hundred and twenty-five per cent. in thirty years, and that from natural increase; if the importation from Africa, which was legal into some of the States for a short time in that period, did not exceed the amount of manumissions, which are estimated at about 100,000. Though this cannot be exactly ascertained, there can be no reasonable doubt that the natural increase must have been at least twenty-five per cent. in every ten years. But we need not now confine our comparison to the United States, for we have many cases in the West Indies to prove, that if the slaves were well treated, a similar increase would take place there, an increase which, in thirty years from this time, would make their numbers nearly 1,400,000, whilst in the same time, at the present rate of decrease, they would be reduced to little more than 550,000.

Does not a system, now proceeding at such a rate as to destroy the lives, or prevent the existence of 800,000 human beings in thirty years, imperiously demand investigation, and more especially when it is known that this destruction or prevention of life, is the chief means of keeping slavery in the British West India islands in existence; for with such

* See *Impolicy of Slavery, and Support of Slavery Investigated*.

increase, a great proportion of the population of many of the islands must have become free?

The pecuniary advantages of such an increase would be almost incalculable, and we have only to look at the United States to be convinced that these views are neither visionary nor speculative. The American cotton planters live on their estates, and have to depend on their own good management for success; whilst most of the British sugar planters reside in England, and are supported in their mismanagement by bounties and protections: if these were withdrawn, they would soon discover that in the good treatment of their slaves they would have ample compensation, and that a difference in their numbers of three per cent. per annum would be more than equal to a bounty of 6s. per cwt. on their sugar.*

It appears that in the island of Jamaica alone, the population is less by 400,000 slaves than, under proper management, it ought to be. If the treatment in the other colonies has produced a similar effect (and we have no reason to suppose it has been of a better description), the whole loss will be 800,000 slaves. Speaking of them merely as property, and estimating their price at £50 per head, this treatment has of itself occasioned a loss in property to the amazing extent of 40 millions sterling, in the short space of thirty years only.

It is to the continuance of this miserable system of neg-

* It is curious to estimate the effects of the bounty which we are paying for the support of Slavery. It enables the Planters to support a system of ill-treatment which decreases the number of their slaves at the rate of $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. per annum, instead of their increasing at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. (as in the United States and elsewhere). We shall find the loss or destruction of property, and that property *human beings*, to amount, by the above calculation, to somewhere about 1,200,000 *per annum*, which is exactly the amount of the bounty we pay them.—Thus the bounty by which the price of sugar is raised, just reimburses the planters for the loss of their slaves by ill-treatment—take off the bounty, and the ill-treatment *must* cease.—See *Relief of West Indian Distress, and Support of Slavery Investigated. Passim.*

lect and cruelty, that the present distress of the colonists, of which we hear so much, can alone be attributed.

But for this, the planters, instead of becoming every day more deeply involved, would have shared in the rapid increase of prosperity which has attended the nation in general.

But let it not for one moment be forgotten, that the People of England are the real supporters of Slavery: and that, by a large annual pecuniary sacrifice, they not only uphold it in all its unmitigated malignity, but prevent the operation of a principle which would soon terminate its existence.

If it be an established truth "that free labour is cheaper than slave labour," the competition of the former must soon put an end to the slavery of our colonies, but for the factitious aid which we are affording it.

Wherever this aid has not been granted, the efficacy of such a competition has been proved in the most remarkable manner.

Forty years ago little or no Indigo was exported from British India. The whole of that article then used in Europe was the product of slave labour. A few individuals in Bengal employed their capital and their intelligence in inciting the natives to enlarge their cultivation of it, and in preparing it for the European market; and, though abundantly discouraged in the first instance, yet, the duties being nearly equalized, their efforts were at length crowned with complete success. Such, indeed, has been the effect of British skill and capital united, when employed in calling free labour into action, that, notwithstanding the enormous freights (five times their present rate) which, for a time, the importers of it had to pay, the indigo of India has been gradually displacing from the market the indigo grown by slaves; until, at length, with the help of the free trade, and the lighter freights consequent upon it, there is not now one ounce of indigo the produce of slave labour, imported into Europe; while the value of the indigo grown in British India amounts

to nearly four millions sterling annually.* The only existing competitors in this branch of trade are the free labourers of Guatemala and the Caraccas; and their competition, which had for a time been nearly extinguished, is now only reviving with the new-born liberties of those regions.†

With the knowledge of this extraordinary fact, it is impossible to doubt that, but for the bounty on West India sugar and the protecting duty of 10s. per cwt. against all sugar raised in the East, slave labour must have yielded to free labour in the cultivation of this article also, which is the great staple of slavery.

Notwithstanding the oppressive weight of the latter impost—notwithstanding the aggravation of all the charges of transport by the distance of the place of its growth—notwithstanding the great imperfection and expensiveness of the rude process by which it is at present manufactured—notwithstanding the absence of encouragement from the application of British capital and skill to its production—notwithstanding all these disadvantages, some descriptions of the sugar of Hindostan come even now into direct competition with the sugars of the West Indies in the market of Great Britain. This single circumstance appears to be conclusive. It appears to prove clearly that the free-grown sugars of British India might be sold, if the present protecting duty were removed, considerably cheaper than the slave-grown sugar of the British West Indies.

These facts are of the highest importance, not only because they confirm the general principle for which we are contending, but because they lead to the great object of our

* When the above estimate was made the price of Indigo was very high. The average annual value of the article is about three millions sterling. It is not known that there is any indigo whatever cultivated by slave labour, although, from the nature of things, it may be difficult to ascertain it with certainty. The quantity, however, if any, must be exceedingly small.

† See Address of the Society for Mitigating Slavery, 9th of February, 1825.

enquiry, and point out a specific means by which we can effect the entire abolition of the slave trade and of slavery.

The Nineteenth Report of the African Institution, after detailing the ineffectual efforts of the British Government to restrain the ravages of the slave trade, concludes with the following observations :—

“ Our own slave trade is extinct. But a state of things, such as at the institution of this Society, never could have been anticipated, has arisen since the peace : a new disturbing force is introduced which we have not the power of controlling ; and the enemies of humanity have rushed in between us and our object, and threatened to bear it beyond our reach.

“ As in the abolition of the slave trade we originally sought the mitigation of slavery, so we are now driven to consider, whether any other efficient means are left us, than that of reversing our course of proceeding, and whether we must not look henceforward to the mitigation and extinction of slavery as our only security for the abolition of the slave trade. We cannot, it is true, compel other nations to abandon it—it seems too probable that they are not to be persuaded ; but by a determined encouragement of free labour, we may make it not worth pursuing.”

But we may do more than this. By a determined encouragement of free labour we may not only compel other European nations to abandon the slave trade, by making it not worth their pursuit, but we may also compel our own colonial subjects, and the subjects of every other power in America, to abandon slavery itself.

Any laws we may enact for the mitigation of slavery can only reach a very small part of the evil. All British laws must be confined to the British dominions, and out of 5,600,000 slaves in the Western world, the British dominions contain only 720,000. Should we even emancipate our own slaves, there would still remain nearly 5,000,000 of the African race in a state of bondage.

But as the beneficial effects of the free cultivation of indigo by British skill and capital in the East, were not confined to the British colonies, but prepared the way for the emancipation of the slaves in the Spanish dominions of America, so a similar competition of free labour in the raising of sugar and cotton, and other tropical productions now cultivated by slaves, would extend its benignant influence to every human being now held in slavery.

Legislative enactments may do a great deal to mitigate the evils of slavery in our own colonies; they may even terminate its existence *there*, and it is therefore our imperative duty to employ them; but if we ever hope to eradicate this deeply disgraceful institution from every country on the globe which it now desolates, it is to the unfettered competition of free-born industry alone that we can look with any rational prospect of success. In the case of indigo, the only article of slave production in which that competition has been fairly tried, its efficacy, as above-stated, has been signal and complete. It is a remarkable fact, that the first few chests of indigo, the produce of free labour in the East, arrived in England in 1787, just about the time when the first efforts were making for the abolition of the slave trade. We have witnessed the fate of those efforts—we have seen that, although incessantly exerted for thirty-eight years, they have not diminished to any perceptible amount the number of our fellow-creatures torn from the shores of Africa, or held in bondage in America. But during the same period, the cultivation of indigo by free labour has advanced with such rapidity in the East, that it is now estimated to employ nearly 500,000 free persons, and the article has ceased to be cultivated by slaves. As far, therefore, as this article is concerned, the competition of free labour, by a silent but sure operation, has effected the entire destruction of the slave trade and of slavery, and may be justly considered, at the present moment, to have saved 500,000 human beings, *amounting to nearly two-thirds*

of the whole slave population of our West India Colonies, from a cruel and degrading bondage.

But it has been ascertained by undoubted evidence, that the other tropical productions now raised in America and the West Indies by slaves, but more especially sugar, the great staple of slavery, may, as well as indigo, be cultivated in the East Indies at a much cheaper rate by the labour of free men. In regard to sugar, a mass of valuable information has been obtained from the records of the East India Company (see a Pamphlet entitled *East India Sugar, &c.*); and from this it now appears certain that if some simple and obvious improvements were adopted in the mode of its manufacture, it might be imported into this country so low as materially to undersell the sugar grown by slaves. It is only necessary, then, as in the case of indigo, to direct British skill and capital to the cultivation of sugar in this quarter, in order to put an end to its cultivation by slave labour, not only in the British colonies, but in every other part of the world. And when sugar shall cease to be cultivated by slaves, it may safely be assumed that the extinction of colonial slavery is at hand.

But as some doubt may remain as to the precise effects that would arise from gradually superseding slave-grown sugar by the competition of free labour, we now propose to delineate more particularly the important benefits which would attend it.

In tracing these it is highly gratifying to discover that, so far from relieving one class of men by a proportionate aggravation of the losses and sufferings of another, the measure we are contemplating will, by that beautiful connection of interest with duty, which has been before adverted to, exercise a beneficial influence upon all. We propose to shew that it will,

In the first place—Effect the entire Abolition of the Slave Trade.

Secondly—That it will improve the Situation of the Slave, and gradually raise him to the Condition of a Free Man.

Thirdly—That it will give an increased Value to the Property of the Master.

And, Fourthly—That it will be productive of important Benefits, not only to this Country and to Ireland, but to the continent of Africa and the vast Population of our Indian Empire.

1st. As soon as the indigo cultivated by free labour in the East had been brought to the markets of Europe in sufficient quantity, materially to supersede slave-grown indigo, it is obvious that the indigo planter of the West Indies, being no longer able to find profitable employment for the hands he already possessed, would need no further importation of slaves.* As far as regards that article, therefore, the slave trade must *then* have entirely ceased.

This trade is *now* chiefly maintained, in the dreadful extent to which it is carried on at present, by the demand for slaves among the sugar planters of Cuba and the Brazils. But if sugar were cultivated in the East by free labour, with the same success as indigo, the demand for slave-grown sugar would be instantly lessened, the quantity produced would be quickly diminished, and the sugar planter *also* would soon find himself in possession of a greater number of hands than he could profitably employ without a change in his system.

It is evident that from this moment he would cease to purchase *more* slaves, and from this moment, therefore, the slave trade, with all the crimes and desolations which attend it, would also cease for ever.†

* In about three years after the period at which free-grown indigo was first brought into the markets of Europe, the Carolinas, where that article was extensively cultivated, shut their ports against all further importation of slaves from Africa.

† The manner in which the competition of Free Labour would extinguish the Slave Trade may be also illustrated by viewing the subject in another

But, 2dly. It will now very naturally be objected, that if the demand for sugar is lessened, and the slave thrown out of employment, the change will be injurious to *him*. In this country, for example, an increased demand for any article enables the labourer in that branch of manufacture to obtain higher wages, to live better, and to work or not, just as he pleases; a diminished demand, on the contrary, deprives him of employment, and consequently of his usual means of subsistence. But in the case of the West Indian labourer these

light. This trade is kept up in its present deplorable extent notwithstanding the measures adopted to repress it, because the high price of slaves in the West Indies and America affords such an enormous profit to the trader as to be far more than equivalent to the risk of seizure incurred by him. But the course of things which we have described above, would quickly lessen this price so much as to leave a profit no longer adequate to the expence and risk of obtaining slaves on the coast of Africa, and transporting them to America. From all the information we at present possess, it appears that the average cost of a slave when put on board, is at least five pounds sterling. Now if to this sum we add the necessary expences of the voyage, as well as the loss of life and risk of seizure, which, together, cannot well be estimated at less than ten pounds more, we have fifteen pounds for the cost of a negro when landed in America. But as no man would continue to pursue a commerce of this description unless it were attended with considerable profit, we may safely presume that, as soon as the value of the slave in the sugar plantations had been reduced, by the superior advantages of a system of free-born industry, to twenty, or even to twenty-five pounds, the trade would be quickly abandoned. In some of our colonies, and more particularly in those where, from the inferior fertility of the soil, and the better treatment consequent upon it, the population has for a considerable time been increasing in numbers, the value of the slave has been already reduced nearly to this point, and in some colonies even below it. It appears by the late Parliamentary Returns, that the present average price

In Barbadoes is	...	£28 0
Bahamas	...	£21 8
Tortola	...	£17 10
St. Vincent's	...	£16 15

It is probable, therefore, that even if a fresh importation of slaves into these islands were to be permitted by law, not a single slave would be taken to either of them, and the competition of free labour would thus put an end to the slave trade, at a period much antecedent to the final extinction of slavery itself.

recognised principles of political economy are reversed; and the cause of the difference is obvious; the one is a free man, the other is a slave. The increased demand in the case of the free man produces an increase in the rate of his wages. In the case of the slave, it may produce indeed a destructive increase in the rate of the labour exacted from him; but slaves receive no wages; they, therefore, derive no benefit, but, on the contrary, an aggravation of their uncompensated toil, by the increased demand for the produce of their labour.

The free labourer, in like manner, may suffer from low prices, either by the diminished rate of his wages, or by his being thrown out of work. But what does the slave suffer by being thrown out of work? What disadvantage can it be to him that the produce of labour is not in demand, unless we can suppose the master to hinder him, on that account, from cultivating his provision grounds as formerly, and to oblige him to sit down and starve in inaction during the time which the law allots to him for the raising of food.*

The West Indians, it is true, assert, that if the demand for their sugar should be lessened, and prices in consequence should fall, the slaves must starve. But in what way are low prices to operate in producing this effect? The food of the field slaves in general is raised entirely by their own hands, on the portion of ground allotted to them for that purpose, and cultivated during that fragment of their time (about one thirteenth part of the whole) which is specifically assigned them by law. Is it then by depriving the slaves of the land which had been set apart for their subsistence, and which the owner himself has now less temptation than ever to occupy, that starvation is to ensue? Or is it by depriving them, without any assignable object for so doing, of the scanty portion of time which the law allows them for cultivating their allotments? If not, how is it possible for them to starve?

* See Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society.

Low prices of sugar cannot make the land less fit than it was before to produce the food of the negroes, or the slaves less capable of tilling it.*

The effect of a diminished demand for his labour will be to lessen the drudgery of the slave, who will enjoy a relaxation from his toil, which, if he could be profitably worked would never have fallen to his lot; while, from the fall in the value of his produce, the sugar planter will be brought into precisely the same situation as we have shewn to be produced by the deterioration of the soil (see page 89). He will now be compelled to exercise economy and judicious management, the first step to which is the better treatment of the slave; and his efforts to render the services of the latter still valuable to him, by supplying him with motives to exertion, by securing to him a reward for his hitherto uncompensated toil, by recognizing his rights, and by teaching him the many useful arts, and furnishing him with the varied employments of civilized society, will gradually prepare him for freedom, until the period when, by this improved treatment, the negro population shall have become so greatly augmented, that the claim to servitude will be no longer worth enforcing.†

3dly. These changes, produced by the competition of free labour, will prove ultimately no less beneficial to the interests of the master than the condition of the slave.

However paradoxical the position may at first appear, that a fall in the price of slave-grown produce, and a decrease in the value of the slaves would give an additional value to the property of the master, it can be established by a number of incontrovertible facts. Slavery is a bad and impolitic system, which has constantly proved a source of ruin to the planter.‡

* See Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society, and Cropper's Pamphlet on the Beneficial Effects of Low Prices, and the Injurious Effects of High Prices on the Condition of the Slave.

† See Second Report, and Cropper's Pamphlet on High and Low Prices.

‡ For abundant evidence of this, see a Pamphlet entitled *England Enslaved by her own Slave Colonies*, by James Stephen, Esq. p. 32, 33, and

Slave cultivation is an expensive kind of machinery, which the competition of free labour compels him to abandon for one that is cheaper and better. Can he therefore fail to receive benefit from the change?

The slaves, it is true, will now cease to be of any value to him as property: but they will be raised to the condition of a free tenantry, their value will be more than transferred to the land, and his estate under a better system of management will quickly become more productive and yield a larger return of profit. He, as well as the slave, will be elevated in the scale of society; "from a slave-holder he will become a land-owner; from a poor oppressor of his fellow-creatures, he will be raised to the condition of an independent lord of the soil."

To establish the truth of these assertions it will be sufficient to refer to the instances already cited in the course of this enquiry (see p. 83 and seq.), of estates in Poland, "where the receipts have been nearly tripled" by a similar change—of the remarkable instance of improvement in Hungary, and of that of the Honourable Joshua Steele, in Barbadoes, where, "in the course of four years and three months, the annual net clearance of the estate had become *three times* greater than it had been for ten years previously.

To these a multitude of examples equally striking might be added; but we will cite only one.

"In a late communication from America," says A. Hodgson, "from an intelligent observer, it is remarked—'the state of Maryland, though a slave state, has comparatively but few slaves in the upper or western part of it; the land in this upper district is generally more broken by hills and stones, and is not so fertile as that on the southern and eastern parts. The latter has also the advantage of being situ-

34, from which we extract the following:—"The late able and eminent Colonial Agent, Mr. Marryat, in a speech in Parliament observes, '*there are few estates in the West Indies that have not during the last twenty years (i. e. from 1793 to 1813) been sold or given up to creditors.*'"

ated upon the navigable rivers that flow into the Chesapeake Bay, and its produce can be conveyed to market at one-third of the average expence of that from the upper parts of the state; yet, with all these advantages of soil, situation, and climate, the land within the slave district will not, upon a general average, sell for half as much per acre as that in the upper districts, which is cultivated principally by free men. This fact may be also further and more strikingly illustrated by the comparative value of land within the states of Virginia and Pennsylvania, the one lying on the south and the other on the north side of Maryland; the one a slave, the other a free state. In Virginia, land of the same natural soil and local advantages will not sell for one-third as high a price as the same description of land will command in Pennsylvania.' This single, plain, incontrovertible fact speaks volumes upon the relative value of slave and free labour, and, it is presumed, renders any further illustration unnecessary.'*

4thly. We have seen that the competition of free labour in the cultivation of sugar would necessarily introduce new systems into our West India Colonies, would gradually ameliorate the condition of the slaves, and finally extinguish slavery itself. Its good effects, however, would not end here, but it would extend a yet wider and more beneficial influence.

* See Hodgson's Letter to Say, p. 12, 13.

The late Statistical Returns from the West Indies furnish a remarkable confirmation to these views. It appears by these returns that the distress of the planter in general runs parallel with the fertility of the soil he cultivates, and with the consequent high appreciation of his slaves. If we take the four colonies of Demerara, Berbice, Trinidad, and Honduras, where the average value of slaves is the highest, and the soil most fertile, we shall find the proportion of slaves taken and sold in execution in five years, to be as high as *one in twenty-eight* of the slave population; whereas in the other eight colonies from which we have returns of the sales in execution, St. Vincent's, Tortola, Bahamas, Nevis, St. Christopher's, Barbadoes, Dominica, and Grenada, and in which the prices are low, the proportion of slaves so sold is only *one in sixty*; and leaving out St. Vincent's and Tortola, which seem to involve some doubt, it is only *one in eighty*.

To the general prosperity of our country there are at present two grand exceptions, the West Indies and Ireland. The slavery of the West Indies, and the condition of a large part of the population of Ireland, form two dark places in the otherwise bright and cheering picture. It may, however, be incontestibly shewn, that the same cause which maintains the bondage of the colonial slaves, also serves to bind down the energies and prevent the prosperity of Ireland, and that the same remedy will tend to relieve them both.

The people of Ireland are in distress, they want employment, and agriculture cannot afford it; manufactures are therefore our only resource. But if a nation is to be set to work, new markets must be opened; and India can furnish a market if we will take her produce in exchange.

From the perfection of our cotton manufacture, we can now undersell the natives of India at the foot of their own looms. If the native who now makes cloth were employed in raising sugar there, the same labour required to make one piece of his own calico would raise sugar enough, if the duty were removed, to exchange for five pieces manufactured in England.

By an extended cultivation of sugar in the East, a demand would arise for our manufactures in that quarter, sufficient to employ the miserable and degraded population of Ireland; and when the people of Ireland are employed, that country will no longer remain a burden to us, but become an invaluable support to the strength and stability of our empire.*

* "Fourteen millions of people in Great Britain raise an annual revenue of more than fifty-two millions sterling. Seven millions of people in Ireland, if as fully employed as they are in Great Britain, would be able to raise twenty-six millions. In their present distressed and miserable condition, they raise a revenue, and that with great difficulty, of four or five millions. How largely, then, should we gain, even in revenue, by giving to Ireland the advantages of numerous manufactures and an extended trade. We might then take off more than a third of our present taxes."

For a full investigation of this important subject, see a Pamphlet on the State of Ireland. By James Cropper.

In addition to all these advantages, in addition to the vast increase of prosperity which England would derive from an unrestricted commerce in exchanging her manufactures for the productions of the tropics, she would make an actual saving of about three millions sterling annually, now spent in bounties on West India produce, and in establishments and armies to keep the slaves in subjection, and of the lives of 2000 soldiers sacrificed every year in the pestilential climate of the Antilles.*

If it should be supposed that by the cultivation of sugar and cotton in the East, we are only transferring the burden from one set of oppressed beings to another, we are happily able to shew, that directly the reverse of this would be the fact.

An increased demand for labour aggravates the oppression of the slave, but is always beneficial to the free man.

It has, indeed, been asserted, that there are slaves in India, and the objection has been much insisted on. Claims to servitude may still remain there, but it is admitted by a West Indian writer, that even there "they are not enforced, because they are not worth enforcing."

From the great population and the cheapness of labour, it is impossible, in the nature of things, that slavery can exist, and, except in some remote and less peopled districts, we have the most satisfactory evidence that it does not. All doubt upon the subject will be entirely set at rest by the perusal of a Pamphlet entitled, *A Letter to W. W. Whitmore, Esq. in reply to some observations of J. Marryat, Esq. on the existence of Slavery in the East Indies*, to which we refer the reader.

* Should the reader entertain any doubt of the immense sacrifices which we have already made, and are still making for the support of colonial slavery, he is referred to an admirable Pamphlet, entitled *England Enslaved by her own Slave Colonies*. By James Stephen, Esq. It is there calculated, from official data, "that during the last thirty-two years, one British soldier or seaman at the least, in the prime of life, has fallen a victim to the deathful service of the West Indies, for every white man, woman, and child that all our sugar colonies collectively contain !!!

But the cultivation of indigo has already proved so eminently beneficial to that part of the population of India employed in it, as to render it nearly certain that the cultivation of sugar and other articles would be productive of consequences equally gratifying.

“ In the district of Terhout,” says an intelligent observer, Captain M’Gowan, “ where the British indigo planters are numerous and have long existed, there has undoubtedly and manifestly taken place a very happy improvement in the state of the natives, especially those connected, directly or indirectly, with the indigo planters, who are there so respectable, and in general so beloved, as to be resorted to by the peasantry around them to arbitrate their disputes, instead of going to law or appealing to force ; also for communications of scientific, agricultural, mechanical, and other European discoveries ; and, lastly, for advice and medicine in troubles and sickness.”

What a vast field is opened, by means of an intercourse and influence like this, for diffusing the blessings of civilization and religious light among the many millions in India now sunk in ignorance and idolatry.

While India is receiving these inestimable benefits, Africa herself will advance with rapid progress in the career of improvement. Relieved from the scourge which has spread barbarism and desolation over her shores, she will soon commence a more beneficial intercourse with the nations of Europe. In the peaceful interchange of our manufactures for the varied productions of her free and fertile soil, a commerce will arise equally advantageous to both parties ; and, by communicating the arts of civilized life and the knowledge of the Gospel to her children, we shall be enabled to make some reparation for the centuries of wrong which we have inflicted.

If such are the benefits which would arise from the unshackled competition of free labour, it becomes the imperative duty of every one to employ his most strenuous exertions

for bringing about an end of such inestimable importance. A strong expression of the popular voice is alone necessary: but before this can be obtained, the national conscience must be awakened to a sense of the enormity of slavery, and the public mind must be enlightened on the means of procuring its extinction. By diffusing information upon the subject among all classes of the community, by means of the books and tracts which relate to it, every single individual may do much to promote this object. Each in his own sphere may labour to engage the earnest attention and active co-operation of all whom he can influence. By labouring to combine the zeal and intelligence of his vicinage into associations for promoting the abolition of slavery, every individual may render a most important service to humanity, and become a concurrent instrument in dispensing unspeakable blessings to millions yet unborn. And surely no man who has a spark of love to his country, and who believes that verily there is a God that judgeth the earth, will refuse to employ his utmost powers in forwarding this great work, and in contributing to raise the wretched slave from his present state of abject depression, and intellectual and spiritual blindness, to light, liberty, and the hope of the Gospel.*

The great end to which our efforts should be, in the first place, directed, is, to obtain the removal of those monopolies which now form the main support of slavery. If these are withdrawn, it will soon cease of itself, and that with perfect safety and manifest advantage to all parties. It must be useless to make laws for abolishing slavery, as long as we suffer our own bounties and protections to counteract them.†

* See Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society.

† Let it be for a moment supposed that we had succeeded in our efforts to induce foreign nations to abolish the slave trade, and that it had been made piracy, while we continued our bounties and protections. Sugar, as our planters expected, would probably have advanced, and with it the price of slaves; the inducements to smuggling would have increased, and the prediction of Bryan Edwards would have been verified, “that we might as well

Let us then use every effort in promoting petitions to the British Legislature, urging it to vindicate its own despised authority, but, above all, to sweep away those absurd restrictions which rivet the chains of the slave. It is impossible to believe that if the People of England knew all the deplorable consequences of the bounties which they pay, they would suffer them to continue for a single session longer.

The bounty is one means of enabling the planters to reside in England, and thereby to neglect their concerns, whilst the tremendous powers they possess have been delegated to others, and a comparative destruction of their property in human beings, which, when the present decrease is added to what might be the increase, nearly amounts to three and a half per cent. annually, has been taking place, which alone almost counterbalances the whole of the bounty.

We will for a moment suppose that this deterioration of property was not in the West Indies, but at Manchester; that a portion of the manufacturers were living in London, and leaving to others the management of their business; that they received a bounty on their manufactures, but that, on an average, this was absorbed in a destruction of about three and a half per cent. per annum on the goods, which would not have taken place under proper superintendence; and lastly, that the article destroyed was not mankind, but pieces of calico. Is it possible that such a system could go on for a single session after it was understood? And if it could not where the subject of it was inanimate merchandize, surely, for the honour of human nature, or the honour of our country, we ought not to suffer it to continue when the victims of neglect or ill treatment are our fellow-men!*

There is every reason to believe that the Government of

attempt to chain the wind, and give laws to the ocean, as to abolish the slave trade, while it was so much the interest of the planters to carry it on." In the enforcement of our laws we should be inflicting death upon the very persons whom our own bounties had tempted to violate them.

* See Cropper's Pamphlet on the State of Ireland.

this country is sincerely desirous to act in accordance with the real interests of the nation in this respect. The King's Speech at the opening of the session of 1825, has the following remarkable passage:—

“ His Majesty recommends to you to persevere (as circumstances may allow) in the removal of similar restrictions on commerce: and his Majesty directs us to assure you, that you may rely on his Majesty's cordial co-operation in fostering and extending that commerce which, whilst it is, under the blessing of Providence, *a main source of strength and power to the country, contributes in no less a degree to the happiness and civilization of mankind.*”*

No doubt, then, can be reasonably entertained of the sincere intentions of the Ministry; but they have an interested and powerful faction to contend with, and they require to be supported by the unanimous voice of the people; and surely the people of this country will no longer continue to tolerate these absurd commercial regulations, by which they reject sugar when produced by the African in his own native and fertile soil, and at the same time give a bounty on his produce when converted into a slave, held in subjection by military force, and compelled to cultivate the exhausted soils of our West India islands.

“ I call upon you then solemnly,” says Mr. Stephen, “ as fellow-countrymen and fellow-christians, to exert yourselves to the utmost on this great and interesting occasion. If you would prevent further sacrifices of your manufacturing, commercial, and maritime interests, of your revenues and military means, and of the security even of your colonies themselves; if you would maintain the independence and dignity of your Parliament, and its constitutional supremacy over the distant dependencies of the empire, without which they are a degrading incumbrance and a nuisance; if you would redeem the sacred pledges you have given to the unfortunate slaves,

* See King's Speech, 1825.

and prevent the perpetuation in them and their innocent offspring of a bondage disgraceful to the British and the Christian name ; and if you would rescue yourselves from the abhorred necessity of imbruing your hands in their blood, when and as often as intolerable oppression urges them to a hopeless resistance—now, *now* is your time to be active.”*

But even if these hopes should fail, if Parliament should refuse to legislate for the Colonies, or to take off the restrictive duties on the sugars of British India, one resource will yet be left to us. The labour of free men is so much cheaper than that of slaves, that in spite of these restrictions it will still be in the power of the friends of emancipation, by giving direct encouragement to the increased production of sugar by free labour, in no long time so to lower the cost of the article as to make it the clear interest not only of the whole population of the United Kingdom, but of all Europe, to give a preference to such sugar, and thus to lead them, of themselves and spontaneously, to contribute their assistance in depriving the existing system of slavery, in the foreign as well as in the British colonies, of its main support ; and thus also to put a final period to that slave trade which, to the indelible disgrace of certain European powers, and in contempt of their solemn engagements, still prevails under their flags on the coast of Africa.

The British dominions in Asia are well adapted to the growth of this article, and are capable of supplying it to an indefinite extent ; but from the unskilfulness of the natives in the process of manufacturing it, combined with their want of capital and the fiscal restrictions to which it is subject, little progress has hitherto been made in introducing the sugar of that part of the world into general consumption. If effectual means, however, were adopted for obviating these disadvantages, the sugar trade of British India could not fail rapidly to increase. The requisite means to this end have been fully

* See *England Enslaved*, &c. p. 80, 81.

pointed out in a small pamphlet published by Hatchard, and entitled, “ East India Sugar ; or an Inquiry respecting the Means of improving the Quality and reducing the Cost of Sugar raised by Free Labour in the East Indies.”

That East India Sugar may be made a profitable article of culture, even under all the disadvantages with which it has to contend, no one who candidly examines the evidence there produced will doubt.

In a country, however, circumstanced as India is, the same means of promoting the culture of sugar must be resorted to which have proved so signally successful in the case of indigo. British capital and British intelligence must give the necessary direction and impulse to the industry of the native farmer. With that view, information on the subject has already been widely diffused ; and much attention has of late been turned to this object and to the means of attaining it. Still, if it should be left entirely to individual enterprise to excite the industry either of the Hindoos or of the free labourers in other tropical countries, the progress of things to this consummation would probably be slow.

In order to accelerate it, a Company has been formed, under the title of *The Tropical Free Labour Company*. The object of this Company is to promote the growth and improve the manufacture of sugar and other tropical productions by free labour, in every part of the world where it may be practicable, but, at present, more especially in British India ; and to facilitate the admission of these productions into general use, not only in the united kingdom, but in every other part of the world. A particular description of the methods by which the Company proposes to effect these objects, and of the plan on which it will be conducted, will be found in a prospectus already published, and in Appendix E to the Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society. As the shares are very small, it is in the power of every individual, by taking a larger or a smaller number, to lend his efficient support to a measure which, if it succeed, must eventually tend to under-

mine the very foundation on which rests the slavery not only of the 800,000 negroes in the Colonies of Great Britain, but of the four or five millions who are held in bondage in other parts of the Western world; and to put a final termination also to the slave trade, which is the disgrace of Europe and the scourge of Africa.*

But there is yet another method by which individual exertions may effectually assist in promoting the competition of free labour. At present, as we have stated, the culture of sugar in British India is but in its infancy, and labours under all the disadvantages of an infant trade. The manufacture is miserably imperfect and highly injurious to the quality of the article produced, which is afterwards burdened with the heavy freight of a voyage to Europe and an additional duty of 10s. per cwt. in this country beyond what is imposed upon slave-grown sugar. Under these circumstances, we cannot be surprised that it is still somewhat dearer to the consumer, but it should rather excite surprise, that it can compete with slave-grown sugar at all. But as a continued increase of demand will most effectually promote the flow of British capital to its cultivation, and the consequent extension and improvement of the manufacture, it is a matter of great importance that this demand should be kept up in order to foster the trade and to hasten the period at which it may be introduced at a cheaper rate.

A wide field is therefore open for individual exertion in promoting the consumption of free-labour sugar, on grounds

* We regret to say that this Company has been recently dissolved. As soon as a sufficient number of shares had been subscribed for, the Provisional Committee used their utmost efforts to get the Association legally incorporated. They first endeavoured to obtain an Act of Parliament for this purpose, and afterwards tried to effect their object by a Petition to the King in Council, but were alike unsuccessful in both, and it was in consequence found necessary to relinquish the undertaking. It will be difficult to account for the decision of the Ministry upon this occasion—a decision so much at variance with their avowed principles—unless we attribute it to the powerful influence of the West India Body.

of benevolence, in preference to that grown by slaves. All the efforts which the Friends of the Abolition of Slavery have hitherto used for this purpose have proved signally successful, and have afforded good ground to hope, that if all other means should fail, the great object of their endeavours might be attained by inducing a general preference for the productions of freedom.

But there is one consideration which greatly enhances the importance of our labours for this object—that let the result of other efforts be what it may, they cannot fail of producing an important effect. Whether the restrictive duties be or be not abolished, these efforts must tend to accelerate the triumph of free labour and the downfall of slavery.

And let no one be tempted to consider his individual exertions for such an object unimportant, or the benefits that will arise from them uncertain. It is true that innumerable efforts will be necessary for accomplishing the end we have in view; but that end is itself of such vast importance, that the value of every single effort cannot be too highly estimated. When we reflect that more than five millions of our fellow-creatures are existing at the present moment in the lowest state of moral and physical degradation, and, above all, when we consider that at least three hundred unhappy beings are computed to be *every day* torn from their country* and from all that is dear to them in life, and consigned to the same hapless condition of servitude, it is impossible, surely, to believe that any thing is unimportant which tends in the

* In Appendix N, of the last Report (the Twentieth) of the African Institution, we have a list of 230 vessels known to be engaged in the Slave Trade, as reported in the papers on that subject presented to Parliament in the Session of 1826. Now if we suppose this list to comprehend all the vessels actually engaged in the trade, which is scarcely probable, and allow a cargo of 250 slaves on the average to each vessel, and if we also reckon two voyages to be made annually, we have an aggregate of 115,000 slaves carried away every year from Africa, *being more than three hundred every day.*

smallest degree to hasten the period at which evils of such magnitude shall cease.

If the final extinction of the slave trade were the only object we sought to accomplish, and if our united efforts were only to hasten the period of that extinction *a single day*, we should even then have effected much. But if there be any truth in the principles we have attempted to unfold, our exertions to procure a preference for the produce of free labour will, in the end, prevent the ravages of this trade, not for *days* only, but for *years* and for *centuries*. How vast, then, may be the amount of human crime and human suffering which the feeblest labourer in this field of exertion will be instrumental in sweeping away for ever.

It is a very common objection to the measures which it has been a main object of this publication to recommend, that they would bring ruin upon the West Indian Proprietors. But it has been, we trust, satisfactorily shewn, that if there be truth in history, or certainty in political science, the downfall of the present system, and of the restrictive laws which maintain it, would prove beneficial to none more than to the colonists themselves.

Yet, if it were otherwise, it is too much to require that the pecuniary interests of 1600 or 1800 sugar planters should be allowed to come into competition with the comfort, the health, the liberty, and the lives of seven or eight hundred thousand human beings, and with the clear interests of the whole community of the British empire.

If the Planters, however, can make out an equitable claim to compensation, let them by all means receive it. They might be indemnified for any possible loss by a very small portion of what the country would gain by the adoption of a more enlightened policy. The vast national advantages which would arise from such a policy have been already insisted on. The amount of the bounty alone, the saving of which forms but a small portion of these advantages, if paid

directly to the Planters, would amply compensate them for any losses they might incur.*

“ But let it be supposed,” says Stephen, “ as between the Planter and the State, compensation ought to be a simultaneous measure with reform, or, if you will, a previous one; still, what is the reference to the one, as an *objection* to the other, but a shameful appeal to the avarice or economical prudence of the country against its honour and its conscience? To the moral rights of the slave it is just as valid a bar as a plea of associated robbers would be against making restitution to the injured party, that it would require a contribution from the gang. Even this illustration is inadequate, for the question here is, not merely whether we shall restore, but whether, as the alternative, we shall add wrong to wrong, inflicting the same calamities on generations yet unborn, enslaving the offspring lest we should have to pay for the redemption of the parents, and subduing all resistance from either by the effusion of innocent blood.”†

But there is yet one more objection which is often made, and which has lately in particular been much urged by the opponents of emancipation. Acknowledging the truth of our general principles, it is said that such is the incurable indolence and deep degradation of the negro character, that when the West Indian slaves become free, they will remain insensible to the motives which operate upon the rest of mankind. It is asserted that they will refuse to work, that all industry and exertion will be at an end, and that they will merge again into the state of savages. If, however, proof were wanting of the industry which the emancipated sons of Africa may be expected to exert, we have only to look at the state of the free black and coloured population in our own colonies. They are there a contemned and degraded race,

* See on this subject, Cropper's Relief of West Indian Distress, and Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society.

† England Enslaved by her own Slave Colonies, p. 79.

labouring under numerous disabilities which leave them free but in name. Their efforts are cramped and limited by oppressive regulations, and they are excluded from all public employment either civil or military. Let their education, their intelligence, their respectability, their property, be what it may, they are shut out from exercising the most ordinary rights of citizenship, even the right of sitting on juries or of voting as freeholders. With them the very lowest white disdains to associate, says Mr. Edwards, and "holds it an abomination even to eat bread." And yet, labouring under all these multiplied disabilities and discouragements, "tending," as the same author justly observes, "to degrade them in their own eyes and in the eyes of the community, to make them at once wretched and useless, without motives of sufficient energy to engage them either in the service of their country or in profitable labour for their own advantage; their improvement in knowledge being animated by no encouragement, their attachment being received without approbation, and their diligence exerted without reward; yet, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, what the people of colour have actually done to surmount them, and to raise themselves in the scale of society, has been in the highest degree creditable to their character and powers, and affords a most encouraging earnest of what may be expected from them under more auspicious circumstances, and when they shall be admitted to a full participation in the rights of British subjects."

In the island of Trinidad, a full half of the property is said to belong to emancipated Africans or their descendants; and it has never been charged upon them there, that they are deficient in industry and intelligence, or that they do not fulfil the part of good and loyal citizens.

In Grenada, the free black and coloured inhabitants are more than three times as numerous as the whites. Two years ago they petitioned the Assembly for an extension of their civil rights, grounding the claim on their tried loyalty, their patience and good conduct, their intelligence and respect-

ability, the largeness of their property and of their contributions to the revenue of the island, as well as on their importance, as a militia, to its defence and security. In the resolutions adopted by the Assembly in consequence of this petition, these claims to consideration are fully admitted, and the persons petitioning are declared to be “ a respectable, well behaved class of the community, and possessed of considerable property in the colony.”

In Jamaica also, which is now said to contain 40,000 free black and coloured inhabitants, a number far exceeding that of the whites, it is only necessary to call for the tax-rolls in order to see how largely they contribute to the revenue of the island, and consequently how efficiently their industry must be exerted. They all, at the least, entirely maintain themselves, and many of them are wealthy. And yet, in Jamaica, as in other colonies, they still labour under severe disqualifications, and continue to be a degraded and contemned race.*

In addition to these facts, there is one circumstance not generally known, which must be deemed conclusive as to the energy and activity of the negro character. It is this, that among the free black and coloured population of our colonies, numerous as it is, *there are very few paupers*. This is the case in every colony, but in St. Lucia the correctness of the assertion has been very recently confirmed in the correspondence between Earl Bathurst and the Governor, General Mainwaring, on the subject of the new laws.

Lord Bathurst had proposed to require a bond, in case of the manumission of children under a certain age, to prevent their becoming chargeable to the island. General Mainwaring (not being aware how strongly, with a view to defend taxes, bonds, &c. in cases of manumission, the West Indians generally had dwelt on the dangers of pauperism), answers, with great simplicity, “ I cannot conceive a case in which

* See Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society.

such a bond would be necessary for children under the existing order of things: your Lordship may not be aware that *there are no paupers in this colony*"—obviously meaning no free persons who are paupers.*

But the returns made to the House of Commons during the last Session, and ordered to be printed on the 9th of May, 1826, furnish still more recent and decisive evidence upon this subject.

It appears by these returns, that in Barbadoes the average annual number of paupers in nine parishes is 998, *all of whom, with a single exception, are white*, although the free black and coloured inhabitants amount to at least 4 or 5,000.

In Dominica, where the free black and coloured population amounts to 3,122, only ten persons of that class had received relief from the poor fund during a period of five years.

Grenada furnishes a still more striking exemplification of the independence of the free black and coloured population. They amounted in 1825 to 3,486, but in this island the expence of the Colony Hospital, which alone appears to give relief to paupers, is only £264 sterling per annum, and even this includes the salaries of officers, the treasurer having £50 sterling a year. But it does not appear that any part of this small sum was applied to the relief of free blacks or persons of colour.

In St. Vincent's the white population of the island is stated in 1825 to be 1,301; the free black and coloured population, 2,824. "We have never had," says Sir C. Brisbane, the Governor, "any poor's-rate or other taxes levied for the support of the poor. The few paupers, *always white*, who occasionally resort hither, are generally supported from the town funds."

In Jamaica it appears that the proportion of white pau-

* See Slave Colonies of Great Britain, p. 97.

pers to those of the black and coloured class, according to the whole population of each, is as four to one.

In Nevis as twenty-eight to one.

In Tortola as fourteen to one.

In short, in a population of free blacks and people of colour amounting to from 80,000 to 90,000, only 229 persons have received relief, however small, as paupers, being about one in each 370 persons, exhibiting altogether an example of ease and independence not to be paralleled in any other part of the British dominions, or among any other class of his Majesty's subjects.*

But if no other facts were in existence, the example of Hayti alone would be amply sufficient to prove the energy and industry of the emancipated African. There the slaves were to the full as depressed as our slaves now are, and much more ignorant. They have been engaged also in a struggle for liberty through a long protracted period of blood and desolation, of confusion and anarchy. Twenty years of sanguinary conflict of the most barbarizing description, sometimes with foreign, sometimes with domestic enemies, were little calculated to train them to habits of industry, or to the arts of peace. And yet what do we witness in their case? They have contrived, in the period which has since elapsed, at least to maintain themselves without any foreign aid. Though it was necessary, and still unhappily is necessary, to keep a large portion of the ablest and most active labourers under arms (who are of course sustained by the labour of the rest), their own exertions have alone ministered to their subsistence, as well as defrayed the entire expenditure of the state. They have not only abundantly supplied their wants by their own labour, but they have nearly, if not more than doubled their numbers in twenty years. And while they have done this, they have been advancing in intelligence, respectability, and wealth. Schools have been multiplied

* See Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter, No. 19.

among them—knowledge has been widely diffused—the arts of civilized life have been cultivated—the reign of order and law has been established—security has been given to property—and industry, having its reward, has been progressively extending its boundaries.*

It cannot, then, be necessary to dwell any longer upon this part of the subject. In Europe the cultivators of the soil were once enslaved; and with the evidence of facts like these, it is impossible to doubt that the emancipation of the negro race would be attended with a success as brilliant as that of the bondsmen of Europe.

“The enfranchisement of the European population,” observes Ganihl, “has been followed by tillage and cultivation, by the conversion of cabins into cottages, hamlets into villages, villages into towns, and towns into cities, by the establishment of industry and commerce, of public order, and of social power.

“The people who have first distinguished themselves on the political theatre are precisely those who have first substituted the labour of the free man for that of the slave; and other nations have only been able to rise to the same prosperity by imitating their example. In fine, the era of the economical and political regeneration of modern Europe is coincident with the abolition of real and personal slavery.”

“And why may not the same glorious consequences,” says Hodgson in his letter to Say, “follow the abolition of slavery in the West. Is it in Europe only that the mind can awake from the torpor of slavery to life and intelligence? What shall we say, then, to the abolition of slavery, under British auspices, in Ceylon, in Java, in Sumatra, and in St. Helena? Or is it the African alone who imbibes a poison from the bitter cup which no antidote can cure, but which flows in the veins, and attaints the blood of his latest posterity? To you, Sir, it would be most unjust to impute such an opinion; but if it should be entertained by any of your country-

* See Second Report of the Anti-Slavery Society.

men, I would refer them to the experiment lately made in Colombia, where a great body of slaves have been emancipated, who are said 'to have conducted themselves with a degree of industry, sobriety, and order, highly creditable to them.' I would refer them to the instance of the American slaves who joined the British standard in the last war, and who are now settled in Trinidad, where, under the protection of Sir Ralph Woodford, the Governor, 'they are earning their subsistence,' Mr. Wilberforce informs us, 'with so much industry and good conduct, as to have put to silence all the calumnies which were first urged against the measure.' I would refer them to the testimony of a traveller whose authority they will not dispute, the enterprising and philosophical Humboldt. 'In all these excursions,' he observes, 'we were agreeably surprised, not only at the progress of agriculture, but the increase of a free, laborious population, accustomed to toil, and too poor to rely on the assistance of slaves. White and black farmers had every where separate establishments. I love to dwell on these details of colonial industry, because they prove to the inhabitants of Europe what to the enlightened inhabitants of the colonies has long ceased to be doubtful, that the continent of Spanish America can produce sugar and indigo by free hands, and that the unhappy slaves are capable of becoming peasants, farmers, and land-holders.' I would refer them to the interesting and flourishing colony of Sierra Leone, that morning star of Africa, which beams so brightly on her sable brow. Or, lastly, I would refer them to a dark page in your Colonial history, where the refutation of their opinion is written in characters of fire.

"Why, then, I would ask again, may not the same glorious consequences which followed the abolition of slavery in Europe, follow its abolition in the West? 'The abolition of the slave trade,' says Brougham, '*assisted by subordinate arrangements, similar to those adopted in the ancient state in the feudal kingdoms, and in the American colonies,*

most undoubtedly alter the whole face of things in the new world. The negroes, placed in almost the same circumstances with the bondmen of ancient Europe and the slaves of the classic times, will begin the same career of improvement. The society of the West Indies will no longer be that anomalous, defective, and disgusting monster of political existence, which we have so often been forced to contemplate in the course of this inquiry. The foundation of rapid improvement will be securely laid, both for the whites, the negroes, and the mixed race. A strong and compact political structure will arise under the influence of a mild, civilized, and enlightened system. The vast continent of Africa will keep pace with the quick improvement of the world which she has peopled; and in those regions where, as yet, only the war-whoop, the lash, and the cries of misery have divided with the beasts the silence of the desert, our children, and the children of our slaves, may enjoy the delightful prospect of that benign and splendid reign which is exercised by the arts, the sciences, and the virtues of modern Europe.' "

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